ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY

[ACCREDITED WITH ‘A+’ Grade by NAAC (CGPA:3.64) in the Third Cycle and Graded as Category-I University by MHRD-UGC]
(A State University Established by the Government of Tamilnadu)

KARAIKUDI – 630 003

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

M.A HISTORY

IV SEMESTER

3214E4 - WOMEN’S STUDIES

Author:
Dr.P.Veeramani
Assistant Professor
Department of Women's Studies
Alagappa University
Karaikudi.

SYLLABI – BOOK MAPPING TABLE
3214E4 - WOMEN'S STUDIES

CONTENTS

UNIT I –FEMINISM

Structure

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Women's Studies draws on feminist ideas and scholarship in developing historical, theoretical and cross-cultural frameworks for the comparative study of women and gender. Hence in order to understand the concept of Women 'studies we need to get familiar with the term Feminism, and its different forms which gave birth to lot of developments in the study of women. In this unit we would try to understand in detail the impact of feminism in this process.

According to Maggie Humm and Rebecca Walker, the history of feminism can be divided into three waves. Feminism has altered predominant perspectives in a wide range of areas within Western society, ranging from culture to law. Feminist activists have campaigned for women's legal rights (rights of contract, property rights, voting rights); for women's right to bodily integrity and autonomy, for abortion rights, and for reproductive rights (including access to contraception and quality prenatal care); for protection of women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape;for workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay; against misogyny; and against other forms of gender-specific discrimination against women.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

This Unit will enable you to assess the factors involved in Feminism and how it altered the world of women and facilitated in the growth and development of study of women. Afterstudying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the birth of feminism in India
- Discuss the factors of feminism and analyze its effect
- Learn about the various forms of Feminism

1.3 HISTORY OF FEMINISM

The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. Although the terms "feminism" and "feminist" did not gain widespread use until the 1970s, they were already being used in the public parlance much earlier; for instance, Katherine Hepburn speaks of the "feminist movement" in the 1942 film Woman of the Year.

Throughout most of Western history, women were confined to the domestic sphere, while public life was reserved for men. In medieval Europe, women were denied the right to own property, to study, or to participate in public life. At the end of the 19th century in France, they were still compelled to cover their heads in public, and, in parts of Germany, a husband still had the right to sell his wife. Even as late as the early 20th century, women could neither vote nor hold elective office in Europe and in most of the United States (where several territories and states granted women's suffrage long before the federal government did so). Women were prevented from conducting business without a male representative, be it father, brother, husband, legal agent, or even son. Married women could not exercise control over their own children without the permission of their husbands. Moreover, women had little or no access to education and were barred from most professions. In some parts of the world, such restrictions on women continue today.

Not aware of the developing feminist consciousness in the West, grassroot-level women's movements have been taking place in India which modern feminists today claim as their precursors.

1947 : The freedom struggle saw active participation by women.

1946-52 : Telengana agitation in which women were trained as guerrillas.

1972 : Shahada and anti-price rise agitation in Maharashtra with women in the forefront

1972 : Anti-alcohol agitation in parts of western India. Self- Employed Women's Association (SEWA) set up by Ela Bhatt.

1973 : Anti-price rise agitations in Gujarat.

1974 : Nav Nirman agitation.

1978 : First national conference of socialist feminists in Bombay.

1979 : Stri Sangharsh formed in Delhi.

1980-83: Campaigns against dowry.

1987 : Campaigns against domestic violence and rape.

Early '80s : Establishment of Centre for Women's Development Studies.

1985 : Agitations in solidarity with Shah Bano.

1986 : Movements against Muslim Women's Bill.

1987 : Agitation against sati

Late '80s : Struggle for a safe environment, demonstrations

early '90s : Union Carbide after the Bhopal gas tragedy.

1.4 GOALS OF FEMINISM

Feminism changed women's lives and created new worlds of possibility for education, empowerment, working women, feminist art and feminist theory. For some, the goals of the feminist movement were simple: let women have freedom, equal opportunity and control over their lives. For others, though, the goals were more abstract or complex.

Looking through a feminist lens at history, politics, culture, and economics, feminists developed insights in just about every intellectual discipline. To this day, the fields of women's studies and gender studies are major presences in academia and in social criticism.

Education:

Feminists knew that girls and women must be encouraged to seek an education, and not just as “something to fall back on,” if they were to become, and be seen as, "fully" equal. And within education, access by women to all programs, including sports programs, was a major goal.

Law:

Feminists advocated for a variety of laws and interpretations of existing laws to remove impediments to women's professional and economic achievements, or full exercise of citizenship rights (such as having women on juries on an equal basis to men). Feminists questioned the long tradition of "protective legislation" for women which often ended up sidelining women from being hired, promoted, or treated fairly.

Politics:

In the 1960s and 1970s, other organizations were created and *The League of Women Voters*extended its mission to promote even more participation in the political process by women including by recruiting, training, and financially supporting women candidates.

Family:

While feminism re-examined the maternal role expected of women, feminism also worked to support women when they were the primary caretaker of children or the primary custodial parent. Feminists worked for family leave, employment rights through pregnancy and childbirth including covering pregnancy and newborn medical expenses through health insurance, child care, and reform in marriage and divorce laws.

Culture:

Feminists critiqued the presence (or non-presence) of women in popular culture, and popular culture expanded the roles which women held. Television shows gradually added women in more central and less stereotyped roles, including some shows featuring single women who wanted more than just to "find a man." Movies also expanded roles.

Employment:

As the feminist movement gained momentum, pressure on the union movement to represent more jobs that were "pink collar" jobs (mostly held by women) increased. Organizations were created for representing women in offices where unions were not strong. Commissions were set up to help women in leadership roles within unions, develop solidarity and support in getting the union movement to be more inclusive of women, both among those represented, and in leadership.

1.5 FORMS OF FEMINISM

Feminism is not a simple or unified philosophy. Many different women (and men) call themselves feminists, and the beliefs of these groups of people vary quite a bit. Here's a quick primer on some of the different kinds of feminism.

Liberal Feminism:

Liberal feminism is characterized by an individualistic emphasis on equality. According to this philosophy, society itself does not need a major

service, but rather laws need to be changed and opportunities have to be opened up to allow women to become equals in society. To a liberal feminist, evidence of progress is seen largely by the numbers of women in positions previous occupied by men, especially powerful positions. In the United States and much of the Western world, liberal feminism is the most mainstream form of feminism.

Socialist Feminism:

Socialist feminism or Marxist feminism connects the oppression of women to Marxist ideas about exploitation, oppression and labor. Socialist feminists think unequal standing in both the workplace and the domestic sphere holds women down. Socialist feminists see prostitution, domestic work, childcare and marriage as ways in which women are exploited by a patriarchal system that devalues women and the substantial work they do. Socialist feminists focus their energies on broad change that affects society as a whole, rather than on an individual basis. They see the need to work alongside not just men, but all other groups, as they see the oppression of women as a part of a larger pattern that affects everyone involved in the capitalist system.

Marx felt when class oppression was overcome; gender oppression would vanish as well. According to some socialist feminists, this view of gender oppression as a sub-class of class oppression is naive and much of the work of socialist feminists has gone towards separating gender phenomena from class phenomena. Some contributors to socialist feminism have criticized these traditional Marxist ideas for being largely silent on gender oppression except to subsume it underneath broader class oppression. Other socialist feminists, many of whom belong to Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party.

Radical Feminism:

Radical feminism is similar to socialist feminism in that it emphasizes the need for dramatic social change in order to achieve genuine equality for women (and sometimes these two philosophies are grouped together). Radical feministsbelieve that society is extremely patriarchal, and until patriarchy is transformed on all levels, the system will remain unjust. A minority of radical feminists are separatist feminists, who believe that men and women need to maintain separate institutions and relationships

1.6 LET US SUM UP

Yes some people say feminism is outdated and unnecessary. They say women needed it a hundred years ago when they couldn't vote or own property. But nowadays, girls can be anything, and feminism sounds like a relic to some people. Sure the women's rights movement opened doors, their thinking goes, but is feminism still relevant.

In schools and on college campuses, some girls are being harassed, even assaulted, by boys. Many girls remain reluctant to raise their hands in class, and they still feel unsafe walking home by themselves late at night.

Pop culture and advertisers bombard girls with harmful messages about how they should look--telling them they have to be thin, pretty, and sexy, no matter what career they aspire to. Many young women see reproductive freedom as their birthright, yet that fight remains under constant attack.

Women are still paid less than men for the same jobs, and few women are running major corporations. And the United States still hasn't elected a woman President or Vice President. Women can have all the opportunity in the world, but it doesn't count if they don't feel safe, their body is not their own, and they're not respected and appreciated for who they are. The bottom line is that opportunity for women must translate into real social progress.

1.7 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. What is feminism and what are its goals?
2. Does Feminism still hold its importance in Modern India?

1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

The term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests.

Feminism changed women's lives and created new worlds of possibility for education, empowerment, working women, feminist art and feminist theory. For some, the goals of the feminist movement were simple: let women have freedom, equal opportunity and control over their lives. For others, though, the goals were more abstract or complex.

Feminism strives to make women's life better. Yes some people say feminism is outdated and unnecessary. They say women needed it a hundred years ago when they couldn't vote or own property. But nowadays, girls can be anything, and feminism sounds like a relic to some people. Sure the women's rights movement opened doors, their thinking goes, but is feminism still relevant.

Women can have all the opportunity in the world, but it doesn't count if they don't feel safe, their body is not their own, and they're not respected and appreciated for who they are. The bottom line is that opportunity for women must translate into real social progress.

1.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Humm, Maggie (1990). The dictionary of feminist theory. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. pp. 278
2. Walker, Rebecca (1992), "Becoming the Third Wave", Ms (January/February, 1992): 39–41
3. Humm, Maggie (1990). The dictionary of feminist theory. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. pp. 278
3. Charlotte; Anne Scott Sorensen (2005). "Three Waves of Feminism: From Suffragettes to Grrls". Gender Communication Theories and Analyses:From Silence to Performance.Sage. pp. 2
5. Ehrenreich, Barbara. "What is Socialist Feminism" WIN Magazine, 1976.

6. Chakravarti, Uma (2005) 'Beyond the Altekarian Paradigm: Towards a New Understanding of Gender Relations in Early Indian History' in Kumkum Roy (ed.) *Women in Early Indian Societies*, Readings in Early Indian History, Manohar, New Delhi

UNIT II – WOMEN OF VEDIC AGE

Structure

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Male and Female, the two basic components of our human society, depend upon each other and each one of them constitutes about half of the population. Over years sociologists and other scholars have tried to assess the problems faced by women and to study changes in their status around the globe in general and in Indian society in particular. We find that man and woman have been established as the two wheels of a chariot.

The status of Hindu women in India has been fluctuating. It has gone through several changes during various historical stages. Historically speaking, women in India have passed through two phases of their life – the period of subjugation and the period of liberation. At times she has been suppressed and oppressed and at times she is regarded as the deity of the home. From the Vedic age till today, her status and position has been changing with the passing of time.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

This Unit will enable you to assess the status of women in Indian society. Afterstudying this Unit, you should be able to:

- analyze women's position in society using a conceptual framework;
- understand the elements of history that laid foundation to women's Development
- describe the features of progressive movements working for women

2.3 WOMEN IN VEDIC AGE

The status of women refers to her position in the network of social role structure, privileges, rights and duties. It refers to her rights and duties in family and social life. The status of a woman is generally measured in the comparative amount of prestige and respect accorded to her with that of man.Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the status of Hindu women in the various ages to assess her real position today.

The Rig-Vedic society was a free society. The Aryans evidently preferred male child to female child. However, females were as free as their male

counterparts. Education was equally open for boys and girls. Girls studied the Veda and fine arts. Women never observed purdha in the Vedic period. They enjoyed freedom in selecting their mates. But divorce was not permissible to them. In the family, they enjoyed complete freedom and were treated as Ardhanginis.

In domestic life women were considered to be supreme and enjoyed freedom. Home was the place of production. Spinning and weaving of clothes was done at home. Women helped their husbands in agricultural pursuits also. Husband used to consult his wife on financial matters.

Unmarried daughters had share in their fathers' property. Daughter had full legal rights in the property of her father in the absence of any son. Mother's property, after her death, was equally divided among sons and unmarried daughters. However, married women had no share in father's property. As a wife, a woman had no direct share in her husband's property. A widowed mother had some rights.

2.3.1 Status of Women in the Epics

Epic age, in the history of female freedom, may be regarded as a golden age. Women had been accorded an honorable status in the society. Most of the female characters of Ramayana and Mahabharata were well educated.

The Ramayana illustrates the Hindu ideal women of India. In Mahabharata we find instances where women gave counsel and advice to men on social and religious issues. Women had an effective role in social and political life of the then society.A general survey of the Puranas reveals that the position of women declined in the corresponding age.

2.3.2 Status of Women in the Smritis

While speaking about woman and her relation to man, Manu says "Women must always be honored and respected by the father, brother, husband and brother-in-law who desire their own welfare, and where women are honoured, there the very Gods are pleased, but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite even could yield rewards".

Manu observes that the family, in which women suffer, is bound to be ruined, while the family in which women are happy is bound to prosper. He further enjoins that every person is to maintain peace with the female members of the household. He also advises every householder to treat his daughter as the highest object of tenderness and honour mother as the most venerable person in the world.

On the other hand, we find a number of provisions in the Manu Smriti, which certainly go against her interests.Women are deprived of the Upanayana ceremony and thereby of education. Manu relegates her to an entirely subservient position. He preaches self-negation as the highest ideal of a wife. She is asked to serve and worship her husband even if he is not a person of all virtue and character. Since service and worship of the husband are the primary duties of a wife, by so performing she can hope to attain heaven.

Manu deprives women of her economic rights also. He says, "A wife, a son and a Slave, these three are declared to have no property, the wealth which they earn is for him to whom they belong". It appears that Manu had a very poor opinion about women. According to him women should be guarded against her evil inclinations. Otherwise she will bring sorrow to both the families. He also observes that if a woman is chaste, it is because she has not

found a proper man, place and opportunity. He, therefore, calls her a 'Pramada a temptress. So, he wants woman to be under the surveillance of father in her childhood, her husband in her youth and her sons after the death of her husband. He declares in unequivocal terms that no woman deserves independence.

There are two schools of thought regarding the status of women in ancient India. One school has described women as the 'equals of men', while the other school holds that women were held not only in disrespect but even in positive hatred.

2.3.3. Status of Women in the Buddhist Period

Many evil social practices, like the practice of prepuberty marriages, denial of right of women to education and also to mate selection etc were imposed on women during the periods of Brahmans and Puranas.

In the Buddhist period, the position of women improved to some extent. In the religious field, women came to occupy a distinctly superior place. They had their own Sangha called Bhikshuni 'Sangha', which provided avenues of cultural activities and social services. They got ample opportunities in public life. However, their economic status remained unchanged.

2.3.4 Status of Women in Medieval Period

According to ancient Hindu texts and tradition, until about 500 B.C. women in India enjoyed considerable freedom. But dur.ng the next thousand years, women's position gradually deteriorated. Educational and religious parity was denied to them and widow remarriage was forbidden.

In fact, the status of women started degenerating in the post-Vedic age because of the conception of purity and pollution and restrictions of inter-caste marriages. Child marriage had started in the Smriti age. During this period, a woman's husband was regarded as God. During the middle ages, the position of women in Hindu society further degenerated. A number of problems arose for Hindu women in the Mughal period.

The first Muslim invasion took place in India in the eighth century. During this period the Hindu society was engaged in evolving, under the leadership of Sankaracharya, a technique to face the expanding Buddhism. Sankaracharya re- emphasised the supremacy of Vedas to counter the spread of Buddhism, and the Vedas had given a status of equality to women. India experienced a second Muslim invasion in the eleventh century when Mohammad Ghazni conquered India. From this period till the middle of the eighteenth century, when the British rule was established in the country the breakdown of social institutions, the vast migration of people and the economic depression in the country contributed to a general decline of social life, particularly among women.

The 'Purdah' system was followed which resulted in seclusion of women. Education of women in whatever form came to be stopped. Child marriage was started. During this period the inhuman practice of 'Sati Pratha was in vogue. Purdah Pratha, Sati Pratha, child marriage, girl killing, polygamy etc. were the main social evils of this period.

However, during the fifteenth century, the situation underwent some change. The Bhakti movement organised by Ramanujacharya during this period introduced new trends in the social and religious life of Indian women. The saints like Chaitanya, Nanak, Kabir, Meera, Ramdas and Tulsi stood for the

right of women to religious worship. Hence, this movement, at least, provided religious freedom to women.

As a result of this freedom, they secured certain social freedom also. The saints encouraged women to read religious books and to educate themselves. Although the Bhakti movement gave a new life to women, this movement did not bring any substantial change in economic status of women. Hence, women continued to hold low status in the society.

2.4 WOMEN DURING POST VEDIC PERIOD

The status of women gradually declined during the post-Vedic period. Most probably, the woman's status deteriorated due to the introduction of non-Aryan wife. The non-Aryan wives did not have any knowledge of Vedic rituals. They could not associate themselves with their Aryan husbands in various religious performances. At a later stage, the Aryan wives, too, lost many privileges which they enjoyed in the earlier period.

In course of time, the girls were denied of formal education. The marriageable age of girls came down to 8 or 10 years. Thus the incidence of pre-puberty marriages increased and child-wives without education became the order of the day.

The amount of gift in the marriage was nominal. Therefore, it did not create any problem in the settlement of marriage. There are conflicting opinions about the wife's position in the household. Whereas Manu held that "married women must be honored and adorned by their father, brothers, husbands and brother's-in-law who designed their own welfare," Jajnavalklya declared that woman should follow the words of their husbands. The Mahabharata prescribed that "by virtue of her obedience and devotion to her husband wife would be able to achieve paradise."

2.5 LET US SUM UP

The woman was regarded as having an equally important share in the social and religious life because a man without woman was considered as an inadequate person. She regularly participated in religious ceremonies with her husband. There were many scholars who composed hymns of Rig Veda. Lopamudra, Gargi and Maitreye were the pioneers among them. Lopamudra, the wife of Agasti rishi, composed two verses of Rig Veda.

It may be concluded that during vedic period the status of women was not unequal to that of men. Women got the same education as men and participated in the philosophical debates.Women had equal rights in social and religious fields but had limited rights in economic field.

2.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Elaborate the status of women during the Buddhist period.

2. How do you describe the position of Women during the Post Vedic Period.

2.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

In the Buddhist period, the position of women improved to some extent. In the religious field, women came to occupy a distinctly superior place. They had their own Sangha called Bhikshuni 'Sangha', which provided avenues of

cultural activities and social services. They got ample opportunities in public life. However, their economic status remained unchanged.

The status of women gradually declined during the post-Vedic period. Most probably, the woman's status deteriorated due to the introduction of non-Aryan wife. The non-Aryan wives did not have any knowledge of Vedic rituals. They could not associate themselves with their Aryan husbands in various religious performances. At a later stage, the Aryan wives, too, lost many privileges which they enjoyed in the earlier period.

It may be concluded that during vedic period the status of women was not unequal to that of men. Women got the same education as men and participated in the philosophical debates.Women had equal rights in social and religious fields but had limited rights in economic field.

2.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Desai, Neera and Usha Thakkar (2003) *Women in India Society*, National book Trust, New Delhi, Reprint
2. Majumda R, Pusalkar A, Majumdar A, editors. The History and Culture of Indian People: The Vedic Age. Mumbai: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; 1996. p. 392-3.
3. Indra. Status of Women in Ancient India. Banaras: Motilal Banarassidass; 1955. p. 2, 69.
4. Abhedananda S. Women's Place in Hindu Religion. 10 th ed. Calcutta: Ramakrishna Vedanta Society; 1982. p. 3-8.
5. Joshi PS. Cultural History of Ancient India. New Delhi: S. Chand; 1978. p. 7.
6. Kapadia K. Marriage and Family in India. London: Oxford Univ. Press; 1966. p. 59.

UNIT III –WOMEN DURING MUGHAL EMPIRE

Structure

3.1 INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing emphasis on the social, economic, political and cultural life of women in general, as well as that on royal women of the Mughal period. On the basis of available evidence on the rights enjoyed by women, it can be gathered that right of women to be sovereigns of kingdoms was familiar to the Persians; the Mongols as well as the Turkish royal women also enjoyed certain political privileges.

Unlike the common women the royal ladies were exempted from some religious and other customs. Royal ladies have great respect and love with their kings and they were respected from public also. But common women were enjoyed lowest position. Apart from this distinction, there is a similarity between the both classes of ladies that is to be under the traditional bondage and guardianship of men.

During the period of Mughal in India, there was no improvement in women's status as being in ancient period. From the beginning of Brahmanism in ancient India, women have been leading their life under the control and shelter of men.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

From this unit you will be able

- To reveal the status of royal women, both in court and public.
- To expose the conditions of common women in the society.
- To evaluate the position of women in the Mughal period.

3.3 STATUS OF WOMEN DURING MUGHAL RULE

At the very outset, we can say that before the advent of the Mughals in India, the condition of women was reasonably good. It was never disappointing. In course of time, women lost much of their status and rights. In earlier periods they enjoyed many rights. Though they have lost much,even now what they have is quite considerable.

When the Turks came to India, they brought with them their own culture. Their culture was the culture of the Arabs and the Abbasids. Among them also, women had respectable positions. They took active interest in

politics. In earlier times they associated with men fairly easily. But the segregation started from the 10th century onwards. Many women easily competed with men in intellectual aspects also. But they were not encouraged to dwell in or probe into the field of Philosophy. On account of their natural instincts, they were quite good in the fields of fine arts such as music, dance etc Some of them took a lot of interest in fashion-designing.

Though there was lot of upheaval in the 11th century in the West, women were adored and respected. Their chivalry was respected and encouraged.These customs and practices, no doubt, had come from the Turkish omgins but later on they blended with local traditions and culture and this type of mixed culture was practiced by the people.

3.3.1 Royal Women

If we look at the status of Mughal royal women, they were enjoying a very freedom and well status both in the court and the public. They were well educated and from the knowledge of administration they were watching the activities which had took place in Darbar. Some royal ladies had deeply been influenced over the kings. By using their freedom and status, they contributed to the fields of literature, art and architecture as well as in the field of social works. Thus they were reputed by the public also. The sultans were also trained being with their women with great respect and affection.

Akbar requested his mother in law Gulbadan Begum (Humayun's sister) to spend her last days in royal harem. She was so honourable and she wrote the book 'Humayun Nama' the important events of Humayun's life only for the request of Emperor Akbar. From this book we rebuilt the personality and history of Humayun and the credit of this job should be going to GulbadanBegum because of her scholarliness. Akbar's foster mother MahamAnaga had very influenced over Prince Akbar. Sometimes he had not been ignored her words regarding the state administration also. MahamAnaga played crucial role in the Petticoat Government in which Akbar was a puppet for the four years from 1506 to 1564. She gave a wonderful contribution to the field of architecture with the building 'Kairul Manzil'. It means that MahamAnaga also had her own wealth and having very freedom and well-respected lady. Jodhabhai was very beloved wife of Akbar. To expressing his love in Jodhabhai he built a palace in her name in Fatepur Sikri. Thus, she got an exalted place in his heart.

The position of women in the court of Akbar was better than the period of the rest of Mughal rules. But also, they were not fully free from the culture and customs. The status and dignity of Noor Jahan was very high among the whole royal ladies. Her excellence and courage were the main reasons for her status in the empire. In his autobiography Jahangir states himself that 'I have sold my kingdom to my beloved queen for a cup of wine and a dish of soup'. On that time she was a de facto ruler of the kingdom. Here we have to analyse the situation carefully if he had given the state into thehands of Noor Jahan, was not only for his affection and addiction to alcoholism but he had realized her capacity to rule the state with excellence and ambitious mind. Here, we can give an example of the incident of the revolt of Mohabat Khan to her intelligence in facing the critical conditions which have come to rulers suddenly.

A much considerable point is that, no one ruler in the history who underwent alcoholism and other addictions had not given the state administration into the hands of his queen. And she was very free from the customs also she never followed the practice of “Pardha’ (a practice wearing curtain by ladies to rescue from lechers) and she had ability andfreedom to carry out her own decision regarding state governance and in the implementation of her plans and schemes. Taj Mahal witnessed how the Mughal queens were beloved to their kings. Shahajahan had so much respect and love in Mamtaz. He didn’t involve in state affairs hardly for three days when MamtazMahal died. He left his last breath looking at Taj Mahal from Sha Burj where was he imprisoned by his son Aurangajeb. Jahanara Begum the elder daughter of Shahajahan was a very respectful lady and she was well educated. After the death of Mamtaj Mahal her personal fortune was divided by Shahajahan between Jahanara Begum and the rest of Mamtaj Mahal’s surviving children. Jahanara begum entitled for the half of the portion of her mother’s fortune and remained portion distributed among the rest of children.

In the war of succession among the four sons of Shahajahan, Jahanara Begum legitimately supported to his brother the great scholar Dharashiko (elder son of Shahajahan). Jahanara Begum and Dharashiko both were scholars, if Dharahad succeeded in the war of succession, we would have to be thankful even to Jahanara. Aurangajeb is depicted as a stone-hearted cruel king in the history, but he had fallen in love with his wife Dilrasbanu Begum. Throughout his semi centennial reign he had never built a single edifice, but after the death of his beloved wife Dilras Banu Begum he built her tomb in Aurangabad which resembles the Taj Mahal. Thus the Mughal royal ladies were deeply rooted in the heart of kings as well as they had been marked in the court also. They enjoyed very freedom, although, they were not completely free from the customs. Unlike the Muslim customs, Noor Jahan did never follow the pardha and as per the Hindu customs, no one Hindu woman of the Mughal sultan didn't practiced the Sati. Eventhey contributed to some fields, which wereonly possible with the support of their king. It reveals the royal ladies were not enjoyed the full of freedom and they were under the control of kings.

3.3.2 Mughal Harem

The word harem comes from the Arabic word *haram*, which literally means sacred or forbidden and is used for sacred precincts of Mecca. In Persian it means sanctuary and in Sanskrit *harmya* means palace.But in its harem avatar, the word describes the seraglio or the part of the palace reserved for the ladies but it became synonymous for a place of where men lucky and rich enough to afford it, could get sexual access to many females.This led to pious posturing by European men who were I’m sure a tad bit envious too. NiccalaoManucci wrote that the Muslims were “very fond of women, who are their principal relaxation and almost their only pleasure.”

This overlooks the exigencies of a king’s life which involved a great deal of campaigning and preparation for battle. Shikar or hunting was a regular feature during non-war times as it kept them mentally and physically alert.

There were various estimates of the women inside a harem with Thomas Roe saying there were thousand women in the Mughal harem to Sir

Thomas Coryate writing that emperor Jahangir "keepeth a thousand women for his own body."The reality, however, was far more mundane and a mere 5 per cent were for sexual pleasure of the kings. The bulk of the women comprising the female employees needed for smooth functioning of the harem and the female relatives of the emperor. Eunuchs were employed inside the harem for guarding it and ensuring discipline.Since it was important to know at all times what was happening in order to prevent rebellion and overturning, spies were employed everywhere and the espionage in the women quarters was carried on by eunuchs and serving maids.

It was like a well-run, well organised department of the Mughal administration and we get an account of its administration and regulations from Abul Fazl while Jahangir, who due to ill health spent a large part of his later years in the harem describes it in his memoirs. The tenor of his memoirs, Tuzuk e Jahangiri, is extremely frank and he provides a lot of information of life inside the harem.

There is some mention during the reign of Shah Jahan and even though under Aurangzeb, there was a strict observance of purdah we get a detailed account of his romance with Zainabadi.A special position was accorded to the emperor's mother and chief wife with more importance given to the former. Even foster mothers were given a position of importance. The rulers also gave sisters preferential treatment.

When Hamida Banu Begum was travelling from Agra to Lahore, Akbar took his mother's palanquin on his own shoulders when crossing a river.There would be a Padshah Begum, which was normally the chief wife, except in case of Jahanara, who got the title on her mother's demise and held it even in Aurangzeb's rule.

The large size of the harem was dictated by a number of factors such as marriage and war. A large number of women servants came as part of the dower when the king married the daughter of a local ruler. The entourage of the Rajput wives especially consisted of a large number of singing and dancing girls. Many prisoners of war entered the harem.The women did not stay in perpetuity inside the harem and many retired after death of each successive emperor.

All the employees in the harem had fixed salaries, whatever their position with the darogahs receiving as much as Rs 1,000 a month to maids getting Rs 2 per month. The royal ladies had properties settled in their names from which they got a regular income. Many were proficient business women.Estimates for expenditure were drawn up in advance and it functioned like any other royal department with accounts being kept by writers or nawis.Tahwildars or cash keepers attended to the financial needs of the women who could, as per their sanctioned allowance, apply for cash to them.

3.3.3 Common Women

The status of common women in Mughal society.If we look at the social condition of the common women was continued to beas like as in the ancient period in India. Common women didn't have goodsocial status and education like Mughal royal ladies. Further the Pardhapractice was added to social customs which were to be strictly followed by thewomen. If any Muslim woman comes out from the home without the Pardha she had been

considering as prostitute. Women were suffering a lot from thispractice. No one ruler tried to abolish the practice of Pardha. Akbar wassolicitous for the welfare of women and other sector also but he was alsofailed in some reforms like abolishment of Sati practice.

During the period of Babur and Humayun the conditions of women continued to be as like as they were before. They both could not pay the attention on social reforms or women's conditions, because their life was fully covered with war and intrigue. Those can be causes for their neutrality in reformation. A nationalist ruler Akbar who was the successor of Humayun in his new religion "Din-i-Ilahi" he incorporated some principles to the followers of the religion. Among those, one principle was that 'any follower of the din-iilahi should not marry the senior and minor girls'. This principle of Din-i-ilahi shows that the practice of marrying senior and minor girls had been prevailing in the society. The number of the cases of marring the senior girl was least, but we should not be ignoring that, the practice was prevalent in that period. The practice of child marriage was quite common; there should be any reason forthat, but even the great ruler Akbar was also failed in abolishment of the practice. This failed work of Akbar, demonstrate the rigidity of evil status of women in the society. From the orders issued by Akbar like abolishment of child marriage and female infanticide, we can picture the condition that how women suffered a lot from social evils, were forcibly which had been forced by the patriarchal society. A quotation from a European traveler is that, "when an eighteen years old girl's husband died she was to be practice sati as per Hindu customs, but the approval of the state governor was mandatory for practice of sati. So, she was taken before the governor, then the governor offered her to rescue from the practice of sati by paying annuity of 500/- rupees". Observing this quotation, the sati practice was supported by the state also. It was a great set back to the moral power of the great empire.

After the advent of Portuguese to India, common were became abduction objects to them. The best illustration for this, the Portuguese was kidnapped two slave girls of Mamtaj Mahal. They were punished by the emperor Shahajahan, but it is the matter of protection for women in the state especially at headquarters of the emperor. Actually, he had taken precautionary measures. During the period of Aurangajeb, the social ordainments of women were tightened. He ordered that, the Pardha system to be strictly followed. If any Muslim lady had come out without Pardha, she was considered as a slut. He issued another order to abolish the sati practice. It shows that, the practice of sati was continued even after the abolishment order of the great emperor Akbar. This was miserable status of women in Mughal period. Another miserable social condition of the Muslim women in the Mughal society was polygamy. There were 500 women in Akbar's harem.

But as per the shariyat laws, Aurangajeb ordered that, one should only have maximum four wives. The polygamy was commonly practiced in royal, nobles and rich family only. Thus, common women were victim for fleshpots of men society. They were considered as slaves to men and were troubled in various kinds. The social conditions of common women were very rigorous rather than royal ladies, because royal ladies were exempted from evil customs like sati, pardha etc.

3.3.4 Education

In those days, Indian women used to receive education through another important source, namely, popular entertainment (kirtan, yatra, etc.) and folklore. The study of the sacred literature of the Hindus, particularly the epics and the Puranas, was very popular with the ladies of the well-to-do families. Music, dancing and playing upon various kinds of musical instruments were the favourite pastimes of some women.

From the discussion between Vidya and Sundar we learn that subjects like the Shastras, grammar, lexicon, literature, drama and rhetoric were included in the women's curriculum. Girls were also trained in the management of household affairs.

During the Muslim rule in India, many of the rich and aristocratic Hindu families were ruined by the political turmoil. The result was a sharp decline in women's education. Only a small fraction of the total girl-population now received education. No separate schools existed exclusively for the Hindu girls. The latter were taught in some places along with the boys, but only up to the elementary level.

The 'purdah system' became very rigid among Muslims which also created a great hurdle in the way of education of the Muslim girls. Only the well-to-do families used to make some arrangements for the education of girls in the inner apartments of houses. These were commonly known as zenana schools.

But after marriage, both Hindu and Muslim girls had little time and opportunity for having literary or intellectual pursuits. Still, some rich people used to engage private tutors to impart education to their daughters secretly at home. That is why we come across a few highly educated Hindu ladies even during the Medieval period.

Education was theoretically a must for every man and woman in the Muslim society. But the Muslim girls, in general, had little time or opportunity to receive education. The Muslims in the Middle Ages were conservative in their outlook. They were not in favour of providing education to their daughters. They considered women's education as unnecessary. Their idea was to prepare the young girls for household work.

Besides, due to the "purdah" system, education of the Muslim women was naturally restricted. Still, there were some well-to-do persons who looked after the education of their daughters at home with the help of private tutors. Education of Muslim women belonging to the higher and well-to-do classes made considerable progress during the Middle Ages.The Mughal women were very well educated not just in the religious texts but arts, sciences and warfare.

Monserrate writes that Akbar was very interested in women's education and gave good care and attention to the education of the princesses. "They were taught to read and write and trained in other ways by the matrons." There were libraries inside the harem for their use and many of them were skilled writers and poets.

It has already been observed that girls belonging to Muslim royal and noble families were given education by private coaching within the palaces and homes. Sultana Raziyya (1236 – 40), the daughter and successor of Iltutmish, was highly educated. She had an excellent education and training. In

addition to reading and writing, she learnt the art of riding and the use of arms. Not only she was herself learned, she was a patron of learning. Some of the wives of the Delhi Sultans showed general intelligence and literary ability.GhiyasuddinKhalji, son of Muhammad Khalji and Malwa, had founded a big madrasah at which special arrangements had been made for teaching different arts and crafts to women. According to Ferishta, women were taught dancing, music, sewing, needle-work, weaving, carpet making, military science, household affairs etc. This proves that girls of aristocratic families had sufficient opportunities in those days for acquiring proficiency in general learning and crafts.

Nur-Jahan, the celebrated wife of Jahangir, was a woman of unique talent and endowment. She knew thoroughly the Persian and Arabic literature. She wrote verses as well. The poetic lines on her tomb at Lahore are from her own pen. She took an active interest in literary and cultural matters. Her profound learning had made her wise and shrewd enough to carry on the administration successfully. She was really a genius in political, administrative and cultural fields.

Mumtaz Mahal, the beloved wife of Shah Jehan, is also well-known to us for her literary tastes and developed political faculties. She was a well-educated and highly accomplished lady. She was famous for her qualities of head and heart. An eminent woman scholar, Sati-Un-Nisa, was her companion and helped her in her literary and cultural pursuits. She was a widely-read woman in Arabic and Persian. Because of her sound education and profound literary knowledge, she was appointed as the lady tutor of Jahanara Begum. She was fully acquainted with the tenets of Islam, and was a poetess too. She had a sound knowledge of Persian language and literature. Mumtaz directly and indirectly assisted many scholars of her age. She had a female Nazir on whose recommendations she (Mumtaz) granted pensions and allowances to poor scholars.

Almost all the daughters of Aurangzeb were well-read and they had been educated in accordance with the Emperor’s own principles of education. Zebunnisa Begum, the eldest daughter of Aurangzeb, was an educated princess. She knew “both Persian and Arabic. She was the most cultured and talented of all the daughters of Aurangzeb. She had learnt the Holy Quran by heart, and for this her father rewarded her with 30,000 gold coins.She also received training in elegant penmanship. She was also proficient in mathematics, astronomy and other difficult sciences. She also possessed poetical talent of high order. Moreover, she patronished scholars. She established a literary academy and a rich library for the use of scholars.

Zinnat-Un-Nisa, the younger daughter of Emperor Aurangzeb, was as proficient in literature as her elder sister Zebunnisa. Aurangzeb himself supervised the education of his daughters. She received a thorough education and became well-versed in the doctrines of the Faith. She also patronised men of talent and scholarship.

Jahanara Begum, the beloved daughter of Shah Jahan, was also a talented poet. She was profoundly learned and encouraged the learned men of her time by giving them liberal awards and allowances. Still, she was very humble, and her humility is evident from the epitaph on her grave written by herself. Jahanara was really one of the brightest jewels of the Mughal royal

court. She always patronised men of letters. She also wrote two famous biographies.

Thus, it is evident, that the Muslim girls and ladies belonging to the higher classes of the society in Medieval India were generally educated and accomplished. Because of the limitations and restrictions of the time, particularly of the "purdah" system, the education of girls could not be universal or on a mass-scale. Women belonging to the poor sections of the society, in fact, could find very little time or opportunities for receiving education.

3.3.5 Family and Marriage

With the advent of the Mughals in India, the position of women underwent many moderate changes, as they brought with them many Islamic ideas and practices in favour of women. The Muslim gave their ladies a more respectable position by enforcing the system of purdah, and thus safeguard the honour of their ladies buy regularizing the customary dower and property rights, the economic position of Muslim ladies was tried to be leveled by recommending the marriage of widows and raising their position, the Muslim rulers had contributed for the upliftment of women.

Dower or Mehar Dower or Mehar has been regarded as an essential ingredient of a Muslim marriage without which no marriage is considered lawfully in Islam. By dower is meant a certain sum of money paid by the bride groom to the bride immediately after 'Nikah; the system of giving Mehar (dower) is an ancient custom traced back to the pre Islamic day in Arabia, where a price for a bride was paid at the time of marriage. During Mughal age, like today the amount of dower was fixed by mutual agreement of the couple concerned, but in practice the guardian considered it their duty to settle the amount and the couple were informed of it for getting their final consent, and it was communicated to the religions heads (Qazi) prior to reciting Nikah.

The teachings of Islam revolutionized the thinking of those men who buried their daughters alive and felt no shame in doing so. They began to love and nourish their daughters, those who refused to shelter their own daughters, became the guardians of others, daughters. Those who were devoid of love and affection for women, now loved and cared for them. The most important thing in Islam has assigned woman a prominent position at social level. Hence, she can lead an honoured and dignified life without becoming a victim of any inferiority complex. She can, in fact, offer her fullest cooperation to man in building up a chaste and virtuous society while contributing her potentialities. Islam does not make any distraction between man and women but both are equal before law.

Man and woman are equal parts of humanity having equal dignity and social and religious status. Before the advent of Islam women were not treated as a human being with an independent identity of their own. They were deprived of almost all kinds of rights. Islam brought a complete change in the status of women and stopped discrimination against them. According to Islamic teachings the women should not be treated as entirely dependent on men, rather both have their own independent identity. The Holy Quran states: "The one who does good deeds, whether man or woman, provided that the one is a believer, will enter the paradise and they will not be wronged in the least

of their rightful reward. " The second caliph Umar Farooque described the position of Women before and after advent of Islam. He says: "By God, in pre-Islamic period women had no position in our society and could claim no rights until Allah specified all her rights in the Holy Quran.

Islamic Shariah considers both the spouses complementary to each other. Mutual respect, love andaffection and concern for the comfort of each other are the sure guarantees of a pleasant life. The Holy Quran says: "They are like garment to you and you are like garment to them ". This is an extraordinarily portraiture to express the intimacy that exists between the husband and wife and their suitability for each as the garment fits the body and no room is left in between. The husband is the best protector of wife and wife is the best safeguard for the husband against the sin. Islam has assigned equal right and responsibility upon the spouse. The Holy Quran says: "Wives have the same rights as the husbands have on them in accordance -with the generally known principles."

According to Islamic Shariah the property of spouses is separate and like husband the wife has also right to manage her property independently. Though the husband is responsible to bear the cost of his wife's subsistence, but he is not supposed to merge her property with his own. The Holy Quran says: "The men shall have their due share according to what they have earned and the women shall have their share according to what they have earned." Islam fully acknowledges the right of independent ownership of a woman. She has full right to buy and sell the property or give it on contract.

The system of divorce was prevalent in Muslim Society, but was looked upon with extreme disapproval by wise and honourable persons. No doubt, divorce is lawful in Islam but disliked by God and allowed only under stringent conditions as a last resort. In case of differences between husband and wife, Islam strictly laid stress that every effort should be made by both the parties to smooth out differences and at reconciliation and the conjugal disputes must be settled by means of arbiters. The Quran Says, "And if ye fear even a breach between them (husband and wife), then send ye a judge chosen from his family, and a judge chosen from her family, that peace be maintained, but if differences becomes acute and should all attempts at reconciliation prove unsuccessful then the final separation is permitted by divorce. Divorce is lawful in Islam because marriage is regarded as civil contract, rather than a sacrament of divine origin, and so the nuptial tie may be severed.

Muslim widows enjoyed a respectable position in society throughout Mughal period. Unlike Hindus, a Muslim widow was allowed to attend and enjoy the festivals of betrothal, Nikah and birth ceremonies, as Islam takes a more generous and liberal view about them and gives them permission to enjoy the fruits of life. The only ban on her, after the husband's death, was to observe strictly the period of' Iddaf which was of four months and ten days.

3.4 LET US SUM UP

In the 6th century the greatest event of the history of mankind which shook the very basic ideals and concepts of man and brought about a complete revolution in his thoughts and views and a total change in his character, was the high spirited and high hearted proclamation of the Prophet hood of Hazrat

Mohammad (Peace be upon him), the result of this revolution was that it not only took different turn in man's thought, but also gave a new direction to his life. One significant aspect of this new trend of thinking was the concept of Supra women which underwent a complete change and thereby established the relationship between man and woman on entirely new grounds. Before the advent of Islam, the world has degraded the woman and had almost outcaste her. She was thrown in such deep abyss that there seemed no hope of her redemption. Islam boldly remonstrated against this injustice and emphasized that life needed both man and woman. Woman is not created to be derided and cast a side. Like man, woman also has her purpose and rights to exist. The arrival of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and his proclamation of Prophethood, the history of woman was no doubt the history of subjugation and oppression she was under estimated and condemned as a low and mean creature and was regarded as the root cause of all evils and disasters.

3.5 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Write a note on Royal Muslim Women.

2. What was the prominence of education among the Muslim women?

3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

If we look at the status of Mughal royal women, they were enjoying a very freedom and well status both in the court and the public. They were well educated and from the knowledge of administration they were watching the activities which had took place in Darbar. Some royal ladies had deeply been influenced over the kings. By using their freedom and status, they contributed to the fields of literature, art and architecture as well as in the field of social works. Thus, they were reputed by the public also. The sultans were also trained being with their women with great respect and affection.

A much considerable point is that, no one ruler in the history who underwent alcoholism and other addictions had not given the state administration into the hands of his queen. And she was very free from the customs also she never followed the practice of “Pardha’ (a practice wearing curtain by ladies to rescue from lechers) and she had ability andfreedom to carry out her own decision regarding state governance and in the implementation of her plans and schemes. Taj Mahal witnessed how the Mughal queens were beloved to their kings. Shahajahan had so much respect and love in Mamtaz.

Education was theoretically a must for every man and woman in the Muslim society. But the Muslim girls, in general, had little time or opportunity to receive education. The Muslims in the Middle Ages were conservative in their outlook. They were not in favour of providing education to their daughters. They considered women’s education as unnecessary. Their idea was to prepare the young girls for household work.

Besides, due to the “purdah” system, education of the Muslim women was naturally restricted. Still, there were some well-to-do persons who looked after the education of their daughters at home with the help of private tutors. Education of Muslim women belonging to the higher and well-to-do classes

made considerable progress during the Middle Ages.The Mughal women were very well educated not just in the religious texts but arts, sciences and warfare.

Monserrate writes that Akbar was very interested in women's education and gave good care and attention to the education of the princesses. "They were taught to read and write and trained in other ways by the matrons." There were libraries inside the harem for their use and many of them were skilled writers and poets.

3.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Soma Mukharji; Royal Mughal Ladies and their Contributions, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2011.
2. K.S. Lal; The Mughal Harem, Aditya Prakashan, New Delhi, 1988.
3. Stish Chandra; History of Medieval India, Orient BlackSwan Publication Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad, 2017.
4. Yusuf Husain; Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture, Asia Publishing House, Bomby, 1962.
5. S.M. Jafar; The Mughal Empire from Babur to Aurangajeb, EssEss• Publications, Delhi, 1974.
6. M Saud AlamQasmi, Human Rights in Islam, Publication Division,Aligarh Muslim University,Aligarh,p.37,(2005).
7. Encyclopedia Americana International, Vol. 29, p. 108, Cited in Human Rights in Islam by Dr. M. Saud AlamQasmi, Publication Division, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. (2005).

UNIT IV – ROLE OF WOMEN DURING FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Structure

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The history of Indian Freedom Struggle would be incomplete without mentioning the contributions of women. The sacrifice made by the women of India will occupy the foremost place. They fought with true spirit and undaunted courage and faced various tortures, exploitations and hardships to earn us freedom.

When most of the men freedom fighters were in prison the women came forward and took charge of the struggle. The list of great women whose names have gone down in history for their dedication and undying devotion to the service of India is a long one.

Woman's participation in India's freedom struggle began as early as in1817.Bhima Bai Holkar fought bravely against the British colonel Malcolm and defeated him in guerilla warfare. Many women including Rani Channama of Kittur, Rani BegamHazrat Mahal of Avadh fought against British East India company in the 19th century; 30 years before the “First War of Independence 1857”

The role played by women in the War of Independence (the Great Revolt) of 1857 was creditable and invited the admiration even leaders of the Revolt. Rani of Ramgarh, Rani JindanKaur, Rani Tace Bai, Baiza Bai, Chauhan Rani, Tapasvini Maharani daringly led their troops into the battlefield.

Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi whose heroism and superb leadership laid an outstanding example of real patriotism.Indian women who joined the national movement belonged to educated and liberal families, as well as those from the rural areas and from all walk of life, all castes, religions and communities.

Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Vijayalakmi Pundit and Annie Bezant in the 20th century are the names which are remembered even today for their singular contribution both in battlefield and in political field.

Let us elucidate the role of Indian women who participated in the freedom struggle against British East India Company and British Empire and made great and rich contributions in various ways.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

This Unit will enable you to assess the role of women in getting freedom for India. Afterstudying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Know about the position of women Pre-Independence
- Find out the key roles that women played in freedom struggle
- Understand the importance of women in Indian Freedom

4.3 PRE-INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS

Spread of education in the 19th and early 20th centuries made many women to be actively engage themselves in the social and political life of India. The struggle for women's rights and equality was viewed as an integral part of the struggle for independence. Many women who participated in the freedom struggle were also active on the issues concerning the rights of women.Ten women participated in the 1889 Bombay Session of the Indian National Congress.

In 1931, Indian National Congress proclaimed that equality betweenmen and women as one of the objectives in the Fundamental Resolution. Though, women's movements entered a new phase with the arrival of Gandhi, women were associated with the freedom struggle before the arrival of Gandhi.They actively took part in the Swadeshi movement in Bengal (1905-1911) and laso in the Home Rule Movement. But the participation of large number of women began after the arrival of Gandhi. Non-Cooperation movement provided a special role to women.Women peasants were also actively involved in the rural satyagrahas of Bardoli and Borsad.They also participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement and in the Quit India Movement.

a) The First War of Independence (1857-58)

The First War of Independence (1857-58) It was the first general agitation against the rule of the British East India Company. The Doctrine of Lapse, issue of cartridges greased with cow and pig fat to Indian soldiers at Meerut 'triggered the fire'. Further, the introduction of British system of education and a number of social reforms had infuriated a very wide section of the Indian people, soon became a widespread agitation and posed a grave challenge to the British rule.

As a result of this agitation the East India Company was brought under the direct rule of the British Crown.Even though the British succeeded in crushing it within a year, it was certainly a popular revolt in which the Indian rulers, the masses and the militia participated so enthusiastically that it came to be regarded as the First War of Indian Independence. Rani Lakshmibai was the great heroine of the First war of India Freedom. She showed the embodiment of patriotism, self-respect and heroism. She was the queen of a small state, but the empress of a limitless empire of glory.

b) Jalianwalabagh massacre (1919)

General Dyer's Jalianwala Bagh massacre followed the strike wave, when an unarmed crowd of 10,000 Baisakhi celebrators was mercilessly

attacked with over 1600 rounds of ammunition. Yet, Gandhi continued to advocate cooperation with the British in December 1919, even as the resistance of ordinary Indians continued. The first six months of 1920 saw an even greater level of mass resistance, with no less than 200 strikes taking place involving 1.5 million workers. It was in response to this rising mass revolutionary tide that the leadership of the Congress was forced to confront its conservatism and give a somewhat more militant face to its program. The "non-violent non-cooperation" movement was thus launched under the stewardship of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru.

c) Non-cooperation movement launched (1920)

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1915 and took up the demand for self-rule and non-cooperation movement. Sarla Devi, Muthulaxmi Reddy, Susheela Nair, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Sucheta Kripalani and Aruna Asaf Ali are some the women who participated in the non-violent movement. Kasturba Gandhi, the wife of Mahatma Gandhi, and the women of the Nehru family, Kamla Nehru, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Swarup Rani, also participated in the National Movement. Lado Rani Zutshi and her daughters Manmohini, Shyama and Janak led the movement in Lahore.

d) Civil Disobedience the Dandi Salt March (1930)

Gandhiji inaugurated the Civil Disobedience Movement by conducting the historic Dandi Salt March, where he broke the Salt Laws imposed by the British Government. Followed by an entourage of seventy nine ashram inmates, Gandhi embarked on his march from his Sabarmati Ashram on a 200 mile trek to the remote village Dandi that is located on the shores of the Arabian Sea. On 6th April 1930, Gandhi with the accompaniment of seventy nine satyagrahis, violated the Salt Law by picking up a fistful of salt lying on the sea shore. The Civil Disobedience Movement was an important milestone in the history of Indian Independence. The aim of this movement was a complete disobedience of the orders of the British Government. During this movement it was decided that India would celebrate 26th January as Independence Day all over the country. On 26th January 1930, meetings were held all over the country and the Congress tri- colour flag was hoisted. The British Government tried to repress the movement and resorted to brutal firing, killing hundreds of people. Thousands were arrested along with Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru. But the movement spread to all the four corners of the country.

e) The Quit India Movement (1942)

In August 1942, the Quit India movement was launched. "I want freedom immediately, this very night before dawn if it can be had. We shall free India or die in the attempt, we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery", declared the Mahatma, as the British resorted to brutal repression against non-violent satyagrahis. The Quit India resolution, taken against British, directly addressed women "as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom", required to sustain the flame of war.

Usha Mehta, a committed patriot set up a radio transmitter, called the "Voice of Freedom" to disseminate the "mantra" of freedom-war. News of protest and arrests, deeds of young nationalists, and Gandhi’s famous "Do or Die" message for the Quit India movement were circulated amongst the

masses. Usha Mehta and her brother persisted with their task of broadcasting until their arrest.

These acts proved that the British could maintain the empire only at enormous cost due to wide spread agitation.

4.4 WOMEN IN FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Men of honor had a significant role to play in the freedom struggle. However, surprisingly women too led from the front and emerged as game changers in the quest for independence.Women leaders made a significant mark of their valor and will as early as in the 18 century and set the stage for emphasizing that women were in no way willing to be relegated to the backdrop of the freedom struggle.

4.4.1 Maharani VeluNachiyar (1730 – 1796)

Maharani VeluNachiyar bravely fought with the British army decades before the 1857 Revolt. She probably remains the only queen to have defeated the British army successfully. Gauri Parvati Bai who was queen of Travancore carried out reforms and emphasized on the need for education of girls thus in many ways helping women elevate from social and educational stigma.

Rani VeluNachiyar was a queen of Sivaganga estate in South India. She is regarded as the first queen who fought against the British colonial power in India. Born as princess of Ramanathapuram she took training in handling different weapons, in martial arts, horse riding and archery, and was also proficient in languages like English, French and Urdu. She was married to King of Sivagangai, MuthuvaduganathaperiyaUdaiyathevar. After the British soldiers and son of Nawab of Arcot conquered Sivaganga and killed her husband, she fled with her daughter and lived at Virupachi under the protection of PalayakaararKopaalaNaayakkar, build her army and joined hands with Gopala Nayaker and Sultan Hyder Ali to wage war against the British and regained her kingdom. She is also credited as the first person to apply human bomb.



Sivagangai was invaded by the troops of the East India Company in association with the son of the Nawab of Arcot in 1772. MuthuvadugananthurUdaiyathevar was killed in a subsequent battle (the KalaiyarKoil war) with Col.Smith. The war didn't even spare women and children, many of whom were killed mercilessly marking one of the most ruthless incidents of those times. Some of the notable people including the trustworthy Marudhu brothers and Thandavaraya Pillai managed to escape the war. Nachiyar was in Kollangudi at that time. Following the death of her husband in the battle, she fled with her daughter to Virupachi near Dindigul, where she took refuge for eight years under the protection of PalayakaararKopaalaNaayakkar.

During her stay in Virupachi, she gradually built a powerful army to fight against the British. In her mission she garnered considerable support from Gopala Nayaker and Hyder Ali, the Sultan and the de facto ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in southern India. Seeking his help, she met the latter in Dindugal. As she conversed with him in Urdu, the queen highly impressed Sultan Hyder Ali with her resolute and courageousness. The Sultan gave his word to support the queen in her crusade to retrieve her kingdom. She was also allowed to stay at Virupakshi or Dindugal Fort by the Sultan where she was revered and treated as a Royal Queen. A monthly financial support of 400 pound (Gold) was also sent to her by the Sultan. She sought 5000 infantry and 5000 cavalry from the Sultan to fight the British, and kept on confusing her enemy by frequently changing her base. Sultan Hyder Ali also equipped her with necessary weapons so that she could put up a tough fight against the British.

In 1780, she came face-to-face with the British, and with this became the first queen in India to fight for freedom against the British. She came to know about the ammunition store of the British. With this information, the gallant queen, known by Tamils as Veeramangai, ("brave woman") then plotted and arranged a suicide attack into the ammunition store. An army commander and a loyal follower of the queen, Kuyili, came forward to carry out the mission. Kuyili drenched herself with ghee and then set herself on fire before jumping into armoury and blowing it up, thereby procuring a victory for the queen. Kuyili, who many consider as an adoptive daughter of Nachiyar, is regarded as the first woman suicide bomber.

Nachiyar also had an adopted daughter, Udaiyaal, who gave her life detonating a British arsenal. The queen built up a woman's army and named it 'udaiyaal' after her adopted daughter. After recapturing the Sivaganga estate, Nachiyar ruled the kingdom for the next decade while making her daughter Vellacci the heir to the throne. In 1780, she also bestowed powers to the Marudu brothers to administer the country. Following the restoration of her kingdom, Nachiyar expressed her deep gratitude for the support given by Sultan Hyder Ali by constructing a Mosque and Church at Saragani. The Sultan earlier conveyed his true friendship by building a temple inside his palace. Nachiyar also maintained good relation with Tipu Sultan, the son of Hyder Ali, whom she considered as a brother. She sent Tipu Sultan a golden tiger as a gift. Nachiyar's daughter Vellacci succeeded her to the throne in 1790 as the second queen of Sivaganga estate and ruled till 1793.

Nachiyar, the valiant queen breathed her last on December 25, 1796, at the age of 66 years in Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu, India. According to sources, the queen was suffering from heart ailments in the last few years of her life and also underwent treatment in France. Her last rites were performed by her son-in-law.

4.4.2Lakshmibai, the Rani of Jhansi (1828 –1858)



Rani Lakshmibai or Jhansi ki Rani, the queen of Jhansi was one of the leading figures of the Rebellion of 1857. For Indian nationalists, she became an icon for the freedom struggle against the British Raj for Indian.

Rani Lakshmibai, one of the warriors of India's struggle for Independence, was born as ManikarnikaTambe in 1828 in Varanasi. She lost her mother at the age of four and was raised in an unconventional way by her father who worked as an advisor in the court of Peshwa. He supported her in learning horsemanship, archery, self-defense, and shooting.

In 1842, Lakshmibai got married to Gangadhar Rao Newalkar, the Maharaja of Jhansi and got the name of Rani Lakshmibai. Few years after marriage, in 1851, Manikarnika gave birth to a boy but he couldn't survive and died after four months. Then Lakshmibai and Gangadhar Rao adopted Rao's cousin's son, Anand Rao, who was later renamed as Damodar

Soon after they adopted Anand, Maharaja died due to an illness in 1853. Rani Lakshmibai was just 18 at that time.The East India Company took advantage of the Maharaja's death and applied the Doctrine of Lapse.According to this, any princely state under the direct or indirect (as a vassal) control of the East India Company where the ruler did not have a legal male heir would be annexed by the company. As per this, any adopted son of the Indian ruler could not be proclaimed as heir to the kingdom. This challenged the Indian ruler's long-held authority to appoint an heir of their choice.So, due to the Doctrine of Lapse, Britishers did not accept Damodar Rao as the legal heir.Displeased by the injustice, Rani Lakshmibai even appealed to a court in London which discarded her case.The plan of the Britishers was to annex Jhansi. They seized the state jewels, granted her a pension of Rs 60,000 and asked her to leave the fort forever.

Many factors led to the revolt of 1857 but the main factor was the introduction of greased cartridges by the East India Company.The sepoys had to bite the cartridge of the new Enfield rifle by their teeth. This was unacceptable to the soldiers as the cartridges were greased with beef and pork. Shocked at the Britishers' attempt to taint their religion, the soldiers joined hands in the collective mutiny.It is believed that prior to sepoy mutiny, Lakshmibai was unwilling to rebel against the British but changed her mind in 1858 when commanding officer of the British forces, Sir Hugh Rose, demanded the surrender of Jhansi. Rani Lakshmibai was determined to not give up on the Dominion of Jhansi and hence started assembling an army of rebellions, including women.

She was supported by Tantia Tope and Nana Sahib.Lakshmibai gave a great fight to the British as the siege of Jhansi lasted for about two weeks.After a fierce war, when the British army entered Jhansi, Rani Lakshmibai, tied her son Damodar Rao to her back and fought bravely using two swords in both her hands.She escaped to Kalpi and was accompanied by other rebellions. She then departed to Gwalior and a fierce battle was fought between the British and Lakshmibai's army. She died on June 17, 1958, martyring her life for India's freedom.

4.4.3 Dr. Annie Besant(1847-1933)

Annie Wood was born on 1 October 1847, and educated privately in England, Germany and France. She was a devout Christian, and was married at the age of twenty to an English clergyman, Rev. Frank Besant, Vicar of Sibsey, Lincolnshire, by whom she had a son, Arthur Digby, and a daughter, Mabel. However, the awakening of her character made her challenge several of the Christian dogmas. ‘It was not the challenge of unfaith’, as Jinarâjadâsa was to say later, ‘but rather of a highly spiritual nature that desired intensely not only to believe but also to understand.’ Unable to make logic out of Christian traditions, she left the Church in 1872 and became a freethinker, thus ruining her social position through her passion for Truth; consequently, she had to leave her husband and young son. In 1879 she matriculated at London University and went on with her studies in science but met obstacles there owing to the sexist prejudices of her time.

She joined the National Secular Society in 1874 and worked in the free thought and radical movements led by Charles Bradlaugh, MP. She co-edited the National Reformer with him and wrote many political and free-thought books and pamphlets from 1874–88. At this point her husband moved court to take their little daughter away from her, alleging that she was ‘unfit’ because of her ideas. This deprivation caused her profound grief. However, when the children were older, they became devoted admirers of their mother. She was prominent in the Labour and Socialist movements, a member of the Fabian Society and Social Democratic Federation, and took an active part in Trade Union work among unskilled labourers; with Herbert Burrows she led the path-breaking 'match girls’ strike to a successful conclusion.



Annie Besant's life began in 1913 when she became active in Indian politics, and gave a lead by claiming Home Rule for India. She entered politics because she saw that India's independence was essential for her age-old wisdom to become a beacon for the whole world. The Home Rule movement she organized spread all over India. She used all her resources to bring together on the common platform of the 'All India Home Rule League' the two sections of the Indian National Congress which had been divided since 1907.

Later she was elected President of the Indian National Congress inspiring Indians with a dynamic vision of India's future. Since the British government merely suppressed agitation but did little to remove the grievances, she started the *Young Men's Indian Association* in 1914 to train them for public work and donated Gokhale Hall in Madras as a centre for national awakening and free speech. She also started two journals: *The Commonweal,* a weekly dealing with issues of national reform; and *New India,* a daily newspaper which for fifteen years was a powerful instrument promoting Home Rule and revolutionizing Indian journalism.

Ten months after she began her political work, the Great War broke out. India was called upon to make great sacrifices, which she did gladly but not a single word was said by any British statesman as to India's contribution. It was this blunder of British statesmen that convinced Dr Besant that the political work in India had to continue, and could not be modified or slackened because the Empire was at war. She was interned in 1917 for three months because of her success in arousing the love of freedom in the Indian people. She took as her motto not only 'strike while the iron is hot', but also 'make it hot by striking'. She taught Indian journalists to write strong leading articles denouncing the action of the government, yet keeping within the letter of the law. As President of the Indian National Congress; she made the office one of active work throughout the year, instead of only presiding over it during the four-day annual meetings, as was the practice earlier.

Annie Besant's life was one of incredible activity. By 1918 she had started the *Madras Parliament,* opened *Madanapalle College* (now in Andhra Pradesh), inaugurated the *Adyar Arts League,* started the *Home Rule League* in Bombay, started the *Girls' College in Benares,* founded the *Order of the Brothers of Service,* presided over the *Women's Indian Association at Adyar* — from which grew the *All-India Women's Conference* at Poona (now Pune) in 1927 and the *All-Asian Women's Conference* at Lahore in 1931 —

and started the *Society for the Promotion of National Education (SPNE)*. Unfortunately, she fell into disfavour with the Indian National Congress because of her opposition to Mr. Gandhi's plan of non-cooperation and civil disobedience as she foresaw the danger of instilling disrespect for the law. Although she had a deep regard for Gandhi as someone whose life was guided by truth and compassion, she herself stood by constitutional methods for achieving political reform. Mr Gandhi's policies were adopted and the disasters she had anticipated occurred in various parts of India. Though she became unpopular and lost her position as a political leader, she still continued with her work for India.

4.5 FORMS OF PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN FREEDOM FIGHT

Women contributed to the freedom struggle in a number of ways. They picketed shops selling foreign goods, participated in political protests, organised Prabhat Pheri (singing of patriotic songs) and provided food and shelter for underground political activists andperformed the role of messengers carrying messages to political prisoners. In 1930, women participated in large numbers in Gandhiji's Dandi march.Thousands of women got jailed for participating in various events during freedom struggle.

There were some militant groups that were active in Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra as well as in foreign countries.Some prominent Indian women who worked with revolutionaries include BhikajiCama, Perm D S Captian, SraladeviChoudhurani in Bengal, Sushila Deviand Durga Devi in Punjab, Roopavati Jain in Delhi Kalpana Dutt and Kamal Dasguptain Calcutta, Lakshmi Sahgal, in-charge of the Rani Jhansi Women's regiment which was a part of the Indian National Army founded by Subhas Chandra Bose.

Demand for women's suffrage was raised for the first time in 1917. A memorandum signed by 23 women was presented to Montague and Chelmsford demandingvotes on the same terms as men. Other demands like education, training in skills, local self-government, andsocial welfare were also presented. A women's deputation including Sarojini Naidu and Margaret Cousins put forwarded the demand for female franchise the Viceroy. The Indian National Congress supported the idea of female franchise and the constitutionalreforms in 1919 permitted the provincial legislatures to decide on the issue. The Indian National Congress at its Calcutta session in 1917presided over by Annie Besant supported the demand for female franchise.In 1918, the Southborough Franchise Committee toured the whole British India to gather information.But initially it was reluctant to grant the right to vote to women as it was of the view that Indian women were not ready for it.Subsequently, Travancore-Cochin, a princely state was the first to accord voting rights to women in 1920.Madras became the first province to allow women to exercise their franchise in 1921.But the franchise was extremely limited. Only those women who possessed qualifications of wifehood, property and education were allowed to exercise their franchise.

Women also began to become legislative councilors. In 1926, KamaladeviChattopadhyaya stood for the Madras Legislative Council electionscontesting from Mangalore but was defeated by a narrow margin. In

1927, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddywas the first woman to become legislator councilor in Madras. The demand for female franchisewas later changed as demand for adult franchise within the national movement.Similarly, the Government of India Act, 1935 removed some of the previous qualifications and increased the number of enfranchised women.All the women above 21 years of age and possessed the qualification of property and education were given the right to vote.

4.6 LET'S SUM UP

India achieved Independence on August 15, 1947 because of sathyagrahas, sacrifices, a century of revolutions, struggle, and blood shedding by freedom fighters. The women shouldered critical responsibilities in India's struggle for freedom. Women freedom fighters bravely faced the baton of the police and went behind the iron bars. Hundreds and thousands of Indian women dedicated their lives for obtaining freedom of their lives for obtaining freedom of their motherland.

Women shouldered critical responsibilities in India's struggle for freedom. They held public meetings, organized picketing of shops selling foreign alcohol and articles, sold Khadi and actively participated in National Movements. They bravely faced the baton of the police and went behind the iron bars. Hundreds and thousands of Indian women dedicated their lives for obtaining freedom of their lives for obtaining freedom of their motherland and only very few could include in this essay due to space restriction.

In national freedom movement, they took active part in the national politics. They contributed in all national movements like Non-Cooperation, Civil disobedience, and Quit India Movements. First, only elite women came forward in national politics but later, women from every caste and category participated in national politics to save their country. But women mostly from elite class are rendered in history. The contribution of lower and middle class women has been ignored. Most of women supported themselves and their family still they faced gender discrimination in jobs and salaries. This exploitation was ignored by the national leaders. But they never accepted it as their defeat.

4.7UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Write a short note on Maharani VeluNachiyar
2. Highlight on the various forms the women in India took part in the freedom struggle.

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Maharani VeluNachiyar bravely fought with the British army decades before the 1857 Revolt. She probably remains the only queen to have defeated the British army successfully. Gauri Parvati Bai who was queen of Travancore carried out reforms and emphasized on the need for education of girls thus in many ways helping women elevate from social and educational stigma.In 1780, she came face-to-face with the British, and with this became the first queen in India to fight for freedom against the British. She came to know

about the ammunition store of the British. With this information, the gallant queen, known by Tamils as Veeramangai, (“bravewoman”) then plotted and arranged a suicide attack into the ammunition store.

Nachiyar, the valiant queen breathed her last on December 25, 1796, at the age of 66 years in Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu, India. According to sources, the queen was suffering from heart ailments in the last few years of her life and also underwent treatment in France. Her last rites were performed by her son-in-law.

Women contributed to the freedom struggle in a number of ways. They picketed shops selling foreign goods, participated in political protests, organised Prabhat Pheri (singing of patriotic songs) and provided food and shelter for underground political activists andperformed the role of messengers carrying messages to political prisoners. In 1930, women participated in large numbers in Gandhiji’s Dandi march.Thousands of women got jailed for participating in various events during freedom struggle.

There were some militant groups that were active in Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra as well as in foreign countries.Some prominent Indian women who worked with revolutionaries include BhikajiCama, Perm D S Captian, SraladeviChoudhurani in Bengal, Sushila Deviand Durga Devi in Punjab, Roopavati Jain in Delhi Kalpana Dutt and Kamal Dasguptain Calcutta, Lakshmi Sahgal, in-charge of the Rani Jhansi Women’s regiment which was a part of the Indian National Army founded by Subhas Chandra Bose.

4.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. C.P. Rai, Working Women in India, 2002, 1st edition, Vol. 2, p. 459.
2. Dr Annie Besant’s Work for Education in India’, N. Sri Ram, The Theosophist, Vol.124, No.1, October 2002.
3. Choudhary,Maitrayee. The Indian Women’s Movement: Reform and Revival. New Delhi: Palm Leaf Publications, 2011. Print.
4. Neelam .Role of Women in National Freedom Movement. Delhi: Wisdom Publications, 2011. Print.
5. Agnew, Vijay. Elites Women in Indian Politics. Delhi: Vikas, 1979. Print.

UNIT V –WOMEN LEADERS AND THEIR ACHEIVEMENTS

Structure

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The British East India Company initially came to India in 1600 to trade items, but it was an utter treachery when a trading company gradually started to become a political ruler of the country.Not only this but also with a lot many discriminations made against Indians in daily life, education, job opportunities, the East India Company passed inhuman laws against the Indians.

Our pre-independence struggle history speaks volumes about the extent to which the British settlers ruthlessly tortured our ancestors treating them as inherently inferior and therefore causing a massive damage to the entire ecosystem of the society.But as Shashi Tharoor said in his book, An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India:

"I do not look to history to absolve my country of the need to do things right today. Rather I seek to understand the wrongs of yesterday, both to grasp what has brought us to our present reality and to understand the past for itself."

We should also remember our freedom fighters to take inspiration from their lives. Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose, Ram Prasad Bismil etc. are some of the forward thinkers of that time.But apart from these well-known names, an unknown number of Indian freedom fighters have also fought against the British Raj with incredible valor and determination. And let us never forget that women of our country have never been at the back seat in this war for freedom.Several women freedom fighters have their stories unsung; many have gathered praises but their contribution towards the society is and will always be laudable.

Let us thus remember some of the greatest ladies of our country, who have fought for the freedom of their motherland with ultimate grace, wit, and courage.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the role of women in freedom struggles
- analyze the life of famous women leaders and their contribution
- Understand the impact of Indian women in Independence movement

5.3 WOMEN IN INDIAN FREEDOM STRUGGLE

Gandhi, during the freedom movement in 1920, successfully managed to evolve his discourse on the position of women both within and outside the domain of home. Issues such as child marriage and widow remarriage were simultaneously addressed.

The late 19th century educational reforms produced a new variety of reading and writing public. Educational and political awareness through newspapers influenced the educated. They discussed about radical ideas for women empowerment. E.g. In 1908, RokeyaSakhawat wrote 'Sultana's Dream' in which idea of women's own governance system was introduced.

19th century women's own organisation mushroomed all over India. Sarala Debi Chaudhuraniorganised 'Bharat StreeMahamandal' in 1910. She combined Hindu revivalism with political protest

During Swadeshi campaign their activities were limited to boycott of foreign clothand picketing of liquor shops. A nationalistic cult around Bharat Mata (mother India) started to emerge which further necessitated the role of women.

In the second phase of women participation, idea of Home Rule and constitutionalism became dominant. Some western women played significant role in this. Annie Besant, who became the first woman president of Indian National congress, launched Home Rule movement.

Margret Cousins drafted Indian women's voting rights bill and launched Women's India Association. Sarojini Naidu emerged as an important national leader who later became the President of INC.

In third phase, the women's participation in Non-Cooperation movement helped in incorporating women from all over India. Independent bodies of women such as RashtriyaStreeSanghas were fused with District Congress Committees. It also saw inclusion of women from all sections – Hindu/ Muslim, widows, scheduled/marginalised sections.Bi Amma, the mother of Ali brothers addressed 6000 women to join men in picketing. In Andhra Pradesh, a vibrant Durgabai collected over a thousand devadasi to hear Gandhi's speech.Gandhi's vision tried to transform widow's personal renunciation into a political ideology. It was this politicized and idealized Hindu widowhood which was used by Gandhi to motivate public consciousness towards a pacific but consistent struggle.

The next stage of national movement saw mounted levels of scale and space of women's participation. In a book called Mother India, the writer Katherine Mayo criticised the Hindu men and slave like condition of women within the family. Nationalists and reformers were compelled to focus on families and making the domestic space nonviolent. Also, this criticism bound Indian men and women together to national honour.

During Civil Disobedience, women volunteers participated in marches boycotts and prabhatpheris. Desh Sevika Sangh, patriotic groups within their

association, was formed for passive resistance. Sarojini Naidu, Muhtulaxmi Reddy, Margret Cousins were put in jail.

In the event of men's arrest, the women's organisation took on the task of carrying on civil disobedience and organising meetings. Once the women's nationalist consciousness was awakened in varying degrees, they began exploring different methodologies of achieving political freedom.

Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) saw contribution by Durgavati Devi who helped Bhagat Singh in his escape after the Saunders killing. KalpnaDutt of Indian Republican Army led the armed resistance along with Surya Sen.She was joined with PritilataWaddedar in 1931 in attacking the European club in Chittagong.

The image and magnitude of participation of the Indian women within the national movement was drawn from the multilayered nations of Mother India and Victorian morality. The women who led nationalist campaign were mostly upper middle class. Yet in the recent year dalit and tribal women have been claiming participation in the nation's history. Many such histories are waiting to be written.

5.4 ROLE OF WOMEN LEADERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

In the struggle for India's Independence from the colonial rule or British Raj contribution of the women can't be neglected. They faced various tortures, exploitations, etc. to earn freedom for us. These women spunk and determination in the face of adversity, their courage to look death in the eye, their intense love and love for their motherland; all serve the same purpose - to flare up our minds and strive for a better world but these women leaders have been long gone and forgotten. They gave selfless sacrifices and even laid their lives to see their nation free and prospering.

5.4.1 Sarojini Naidu1879–1949

Born to a Bengali Hindu family, Sarojini Naidu was indeed a gifted poet and was one of the most prominent faces of Indian freedom struggle. Being a prodigious child, Sarojini wrote the play "Maher Muneer", that had earned her a scholarship to study abroad. Sarojini became the second woman president of the Indian National Congress and was the first woman Governor of an Indian state after independence. Her relentless work for the independence of the country like actively supporting M.K Gandhi's movement and other campaigns like the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the Khilafat issue, the Sabarmati Pact, the Satyagraha Pledge and the Civil Disobedience Movement gained her great respect and appreciation. Along with these, due to her political activities and role in the freedom struggle She had to lead several stints in prison – in 1930, 1932, and 1942 where she was in prison for 21 months.



The Nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu, was a poet and political activist who fought for India's independence. Naidu was an influential freedom fighter who helped draft the newly independent nation's constitution. She first entered university at the age of 12, studying in Chennai, London, and Cambridge. After completing her studies, the Nightingale married PaidipatiGovindarajulu Naidu. At the time, marriages between different castes and regions wasn't much accepted, but they married with their families' blessing.

Throughout her life, Sarojini Naidu worked tirelessly to raise the consciousness of Indian women. She wanted to improve their lives and engage them in the country's destiny. In 1917, Naidu was at the forefront of gender reform, leading a collective of women to urge change from the Montagu-Chelmsford Committee (which was considering reforms to bring "limited self-government" to Indian institutions, according to Wikipedia).In 1925, Naidu became the first Indian woman President of the Indian National Congress (INC), and would later become the first woman to be governor of an Indian state.

For decades, she was part of the leadership in the Noncooperation Movement, working alongside Mahatma Gandhi, whose friendly nickname for her was Mickey Mouse, according to YourStory. She was arrested many times for her involvement with the Quit India movement and civil disobedience against the British crown.

Sarojini Naidu observed the world with the close attention of a poet and changed it with the strong will of an activist. Indeed, YourStory praised her for "inspiring a whole generation of women to participate in the Freedom Movement." Naidu's legacy lives on, as many modern Indian women continue to lead the fight for social change.

"Thy Future calls thee with a manifold sound
To crescent honours, splendours, victories vast;
Waken, O slumbering Mother and be crowned,
Who once wert empress of the sovereign Past."
- Excerpt from "To India," by Sarojini Naidu

5.4.2 Kasturba Gandhi 1869 – 1944

Kasturba Mohandas Gandhi (11 April 1869 – 22 February 1944) was the wife of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. In association with her husband, Kasturba Gandhi was a political activist fighting for civil rights and Indian independence from the British. She was born to Gokuladas and Vrajkunwerba Kapadia of Porbandar. Kasturba was married to Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in an arranged marriage in 1883. Working closely with her husband, Kasturba Gandhi became a political activist fighting for civil rights and Indian independence from the British.

After Gandhi moved to South Africa to practice law, she travelled to South Africa in 1897 to be with her husband. From 1904 to 1914, she was active in the Phoenix Settlement near Durban. During the 1913 protest against working conditions for Indians in South Africa, Kasturba was arrested and sentenced to three months in a hard labour prison. Later, in India, she

sometimes took her husband's place when he was under arrest. In 1915, when Gandhi returned to India to support indigo planters, Kasturba accompanied him. She taught hygiene, discipline, health, reading and writing.

Affectionately called Ba, Kasturba Gandhi first got her political and social activist feet wet in South Africa, where she lived with her family from 1897-1901 and 1903-1914. There, she helped establish a co-op called the Phoenix Settlement and was jailed for three months after protesting the government's treatment of Indians. Kasturba continued her activism in India, where she was arrested and imprisoned several times throughout her life.

Dedicated to the ashrams, or spiritual communities, she and her husband created, Ba spent a lot of time and energy taking care of them. She was also deeply concerned about the well-being of India's women, striving to understand their situation, advocate for their rights, and enlist their help to the cause.

Kasturba certainly proved her own mettle in the fight for freedom. Like Kamala Nehru, Kasturba Gandhi stood in for her husband many times while he was in jail. She helped sustain the movement and spur its momentum. After she died, her husband remembered her strength and devotion to India's struggle: "But for her unfailing cooperation, I might have been in the abyss…She helped me to keep wide awake and true to my vows. She stood by me in all my political fights and never hesitated to take the plunge."



Kasturba Gandhi was more than the Father of the Nation's wife. She was an activist and community organizer through and through. Fellow freedom fighter Sarojini Naidu called Ba:

"The living symbol of Indian womanhood. Never once did her feet falter or her heart quail on the steep path of perpetual sacrifice…She has passed from mortality to immortality and taken her rightful place in the valiant assembly of the beloved heroines of India's legend, history, & song."

5.4.3 Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (1900-1990)

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (1900-1990) was an Indian diplomat, politician, and a sister of India's first prime-minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. She was active in the Indian freedom movement and held high national and international positions.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was born in Allahabad in what was then the United Provinces (later, Uttar Pradesh) on August 18, 1900, and was given the name Swarup Kumari ("Beautiful Princess") Nehru. She was the eldest daughter of a distinguished Brahmin lawyer, Motilal Nehru, and eleven years younger than her brother, Jawaharlal. Accustomed to luxury and educated at home and in Switzerland, she was greatly influenced by Mohandas Gandhi and became identified with the struggle for independence. She was imprisoned by the British on three different occasions, in 1932-1933, 1940, and 1942-1943.

In May 1921 she married Ranjit Sitaram Pandit, a foreign-educated barrister from Kathiawar. At that time she changed her name to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. The Pandit's had three daughters, including the novelist Nayantara (Pandit) Sehgal. Her husband died on January 14, 1944.

In 1934 Pandit's long career in politics officially began with her election to the Allahabad Municipal Board. In 1936 she was elected to the Assembly of the United Provinces, and in 1937 became minister of local self-government and public health—the first Indian woman ever to become a cabinet minister. Like all Congress party officeholders, she resigned in 1939 to protest against the British government's declaration that India was a participant in World War II. Along with other Congress leaders, she was imprisoned after the Congress' "Quit India" Resolution of August 1942.



Forced to reorient her life after her husband's death, Pandit traveled in the United States from late 1944 to early 1946, mainly on a lecture tour. Returning to India in January 1946, she resumed her portfolio as minister of local self-government and public health in the United Provinces. In the fall of 1946, she undertook her first official diplomatic mission as leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly. She also led India's delegations to the General Assembly in 1947, 1948, 1952, 1953, and 1963.

Pandit was elected to India's Constituent Assembly in 1946. Shortly after India's independence in 1947, she joined the foreign service and was appointed India's first ambassador to the Soviet Union. In early 1949 she became ambassador to the United States.

In November 1951 she returned to India to contest successfully for a seat in the Lok Sabha (India's parliament) in the first general elections. In September 1953 she was given the honor of being the first woman and the first Asian to be elected president of the U.N. General Assembly.

For nearly seven years, beginning in December 1954, Pandit served as Indian high commissioner (ambassador) to the United Kingdom, including a tense period in British-Indian relations at the time of the Suez and Hungarian crisis' in 1956. From March 1963 until August 1963 she served as governor of the state of Maharashtra.

Jawaharlal Nehru's death on May 27, 1964 came as a great shock to her. In November, she was elected to the Lok Sabha in a by-election in the Philpur constituency of Uttar Pradesh, which her brother had represented for 17 years. She was re-elected in the fourth general elections in 1967, but resigned the following year for "personal reasons."

Furious at Indira Gandhi’s (whose maiden name was Nehru) state-of-emergency suspension of democratic processes from 1975 to 1977, she campaigned against her niece. Her efforts resulted in an electoral defeat for Gandhi.Pandit had not been politically active for several years when she died in Dehru Dun, India on December 1, 1990. On the occasion of her death, President Ramaswami Venkataraman described Pandit as a "luminous strand in the tapestry of India's freedom struggle. Distinctive in her elegance, courage, and dedication, Mrs. Pandit was an asset to the national movement."

5.4.4 Lakshmi Sahgal 1914 – 2012

This multi-faceted personality, a hidden gem in our Indian women, Capt. Laxmi Sehgal, was Not Only Led India’s First All-Women Regiment but was also A Doctor, Social Activist & More. She was the one who led the Rani Jhansi Regiment, one of the first women contingents of the world.

Born in Madras in the family of lawyers, Laxmi always listened to her heart. It is said, when untouchability was in practice in India, she went to a tribal girl, held her by hand and requested her to play.

Lakshmi Sahgal was a former Indian Army officer called Captain Lakshmi. She picked up a Gun for Indian National Army (INA) founded by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and led it like a tigress in the struggle for Freedom. She was in charge of establishing and leading the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, comprising women soldiers. Also before joining INA, she had served a sentence in a Burma prison for her role in World War II.

Lakshmi Sahgal started and ended her career as a doctor, but in between, she became a soldier. Inspired by India’s efforts for independence, she joined the Indian National Army (INA) in 1943 to fight the British Empire. The INA’s founder recognized Sahgal’s tenacity and made her captain of the Rani Jhansi Regiment, a women’s military unit and the first of its kind in Asia.

After being taken prisoner by the British, Captain Sahgal (or Captain Lakshmi as she’s commonly called), returned to her medical practice in India. During the partition riots, she gave medical care to Hindus and Muslims alike. In 1981, she helped found the All India Democratic



Women's Association (AIDWA), which fought for women's education and employment, among other causes. When anti-Sikh mobs flooded the streets in the wake of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination, Sahgal protected Sikhs in her area from violence and harassment.

According to The Hindu, Captain Sahgal began fighting for the third — India's social freedom — as early as childhood. Despite her grandmother's outspoken disdain for castes of people "whose very shadows were polluting," Sahgal took the hand of such a girl and invited her to play. It may come as no surprise, then, that Sahgal's compassion for others lasted a lifetime. As a doctor, she continued to treat patients into her 90s.She looked after the patients in Kanpur and charged them a minimum fee till she was 92 years old. She received the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award, for the undying contribution to the society.

5.5 LET'S SUM UP

Gandhi's notions of women as nurturers. In her presidential address to Congress she stated that India was like a "house" where the Indian people were the "children and members of a joint family" and the Indian women were the "mothers." Thus it was the woman's responsibility to reconstruct and maintain the "house." She was a great advocate-of Hindu-Muslim unity, and cited it as one of the major sources of inspiration in her decision to join politics. In fact Gandhi himself believed that "women had an important role to play in [this] and in helping the process of national integration by making every household the battlefield of individual Satyagraha." In keeping with the nurturing stereotype, Sarojini only upheld this idea and probably urged women to implement it in her 1919 campaign to propagate women's Satyagraha. As nurturers in the domestic sphere, they would be able to spread the message of unity, thereby, making the prospect of a unified and cohesive independence movement even more promising. In further enabling women's involvement in the movement, she spread the message of non-cooperation and spinning among them. The spinning or Khadi once again reinforced the theory that women were to contribute via the domestic sphere.

His views on women in the political sphere were extremely complex and often times conflicting, which formed a contradiction in his theories.In analyzing the role of women in the independence movement, it thus becomes clear that the perception of the Indian woman, her strength and her subsequent contribution to the movement is not monochromatic. Her changing role, with the progression of the movement has emerged in layers, where each perception of female strength and courage has reinforced or impacted the other. This is evident in Gandhi's thinking where he favored one definition of female heroism over the other. Influenced by his bias towards non-violence he dismissed valor and bravery as exemplified by Rani of Jhansi for a more passive symbol.

Nevertheless, in conclusion the variegated contributions and views on the female role: the Rani's aggressive and more militant activities, Gandhi's ideas on a more passive and virtuous female identity and Naidu's acceptance of these values while still rebelling from her leader's definition of womanhood

together render a complex perception of femininity during the Indian freedom struggle.

5.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Comment on the Contributions made by Vijayalakhsmi Pandit.

5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (1900-1990) was an Indian diplomat, politician, and a sister of India's first prime-minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. She was active in the Indian freedom movement and held high national and international positions.

In 1934 Pandit's long career in politics officially began with her election to the Allahabad Municipal Board. In 1936 she was elected to the Assembly of the United Provinces, and in 1937 became minister of local self-government and public health—the first Indian woman ever to become a cabinet minister. Like all Congress party officeholders, she resigned in 1939 to protest against the British government's declaration that India was a participant in World War II. Along with other Congress leaders, she was imprisoned after the Congress' "Quit India" Resolution of August 1942.

For nearly seven years, beginning in December 1954, Pandit served as Indian high commissioner (ambassador) to the United Kingdom, including a tense period in British-Indian relations at the time of the Suez and Hungarian crisis' in 1956. From March 1963 until August 1963 she served as governor of the state of Maharashtra.

5.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Kaur, Manmohan (1992) Women in India s freedom struggle, New Delhi: Sterling, p 41.
2. Forbes, Geraldine, (1997) "Indian Women and the Freedom Movement: A Historian's Perspective." Research Center for Women s Studies Series Mumbai: S.N.D.T Women's University, p. 60
3. Freedom Fighters of India 4th Volume …..Edited by M.G. Agrawal,
4. Role of women in India's freedom struggle… by V Rajendra Raju
5. Women in India's Freedom Struggle…..by Nawaz B Mody

UNIT VI -WOMEN MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN INDIA

Structure

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this Unit you would continue to read about the two more important women who contributed enormously for the Independence and the political background of India. The stone laid by these women leaders were the foundations for the political future of India. At present we reap the benefits of their strong principles and practices.

There is a distinction between pre-independence and post-Independence women's move-ments in India. The pre-independence movements were essentially about social reforms and initiated by men. In comparison, the post-independence movement demanded gender equality, questioned gender-based division of labor and highlighted the oppressive nature of the existing patriarchal structure.

In the euphoria of post-independence, it was believed that women's status would dramatically improve along with other marginalized groups because they were now the masters of their destiny.However, when this was not achieved there was an upsurge of various movements which raised a number of issues around diverse subjects such as land rights, wages, security of employment, equality, etc. Some of the issues on which women got together were work, population policies, atroci-ties on women, including rape and liquor.

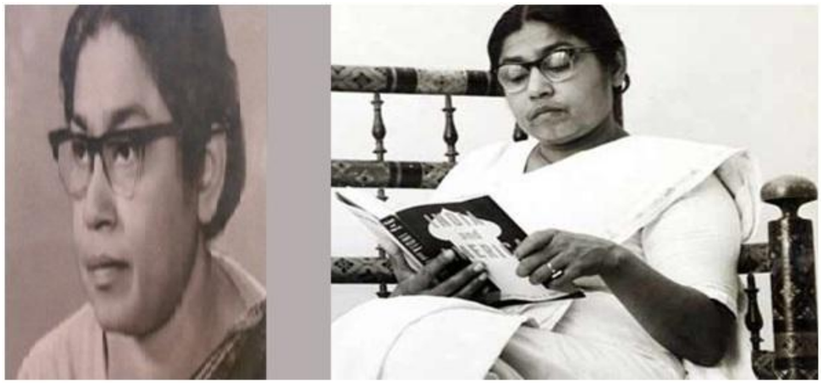
Similarly, we would also look into the developments in the area of employment status of women through Self-help groups. Empowerment has been recognized as thecentral issue in determining status of women. Since women become morepotent source of development empowering them is prerequisite for overall development. By empowering women not only make them to share inthe development progress but also bring out their lasting efficiency

6.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- analyze the life of famous women leaders and their contribution
- Understand the impact of Women movements and organisations
- Discuss the formation of Self-Help Groups and their Functions

6.3 WOMEN LEADERS DURING THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE



The early 19th century saw the freedom struggle take full swing and women from across all castes and class took the baton of being equally responsible and dedicated to the national cause. Where men of stature, such as, Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose and Chandrasekhar Azad emerged as leaders in their own right, women stalwarts too matched them step to step. In fact, undoubtedly women freedom fighters have made significant contributions to the independence movement and in many ways the coordinated synchronization between the two has been an important landmark in the gaining of Indian independence.

6.3.1 Sucheta Kriplani1908–1974

India's first woman chief minister, Sucheta Kriplani, chartered her own independent course. She was committed to the Gandhian ideology, Sucheta was fearless in her mind and spirit.

She was born in Ambala, Punjab (now in Haryana) to a Bengali Brahmin family. She completed her education at Indraprastha College and Punjab University prior to becoming a Professor of Constitutional History at Banaras Hindu University.

She came to the forefront during the Quit India Movement. She worked with other Gandhians during the partition riots and was one of the few women who were elected to the Constituent Assembly and was part of the subcommittee that drafted the Indian Constitution. Sucheta also became a part of the subcommittee that laid down the charter for the constitution of India.Sucheta Kriplani was a Gandhian, Indian freedom fighter and politician. Joined Indian National Congress and became the first woman Chief Minister of an Indian State (UP) and also founded the All India Mahilla Congress in 1940. On 15th August, 1947, she sang VandeMataram in the Constituent Assembly.

Acharya Kriplani,a great leader, was part of freedom fighting movements and was working under Mahatma Gandhi. After marriage, Sucheta Kriplani's husband encouraged her to join freedom fighting movements. On

encouragement from both her husband and father, she joined Indian National Congress. In the year 1942, she actively participated in Quit India Movement along with Usha Mehta and Aruna Asif Ali. Mahatma Gandhi was very impressed with her work. Gandhiji referred her name and she was appointed as Organizing Secretary of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust in the year 1946. She learned a lot from Thakkar Bapa, who was secretary of the same trust while traveling along with him all over India. In the same year, communal riots took place in Noahkali. Mahatama Gandhi send her husband, Acharya Kriplani to go at that place and control the situation. Later, Mahatma Gandhi and Sucheta Kriplani also joined him to Noahkali following communal violence. Everyone worked hard to bring the situation under control. After few days, her husband returned, but she stayed back to serve the people who had become the victim of riots and violence. She was elected as a member of the Constituent Assembly. Due to her capabilities, she was also a part of the subcommittee, which was given the task of laying down the charter for the constitution of India.

In the year 1952, Acharya Kriplani had differences with Jawahar Lal Nehru. So, he formed a new party known as Krishak Mazdoor Praja Party. Sucheta Kriplani joined the KMPP party and was elected from the New Delhi constituency in the first general election held in 1952. She served as a Minister of State for Small Scale Industries. In the year 1957, she was again elected from the same constituency.

She was intellectual and had good command on her speech. She was not only a good parliamentarian but also very active in the debates held in the Lok Sabha. The name of Sucheta Kriplani, will be written in golden words in the history of India. She was not only a great leader, a great politician but also a great administration. She had a golden heart. In today's politics, leader like Sucheta Kriplani are being missed very much. Hope, in the coming days and years, a politician and leader like Sucheta Kriplani will be born again

6.3.2 Indira Gandhi1917 –1984



Indira Nehru was the only child of Jawaharlal Nehru, who was one of the chief figures in India's struggle to achieve independence from Britain, was a top leader of the powerful and long-dominant Indian National Congress (Congress Party), and was the first prime minister (1947–64) of independent India. Her grandfather Motilal Nehru was one of the pioneers of the independence

movement and was a close associate of Mohandas ("Mahatma") Gandhi. She attended, for one year each, Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan (now in Bolpur, West Bengal state) and then the University of Oxford in England. She joined the Congress Party in 1938.

In 1942 she married Feroze Gandhi (died 1960), a fellow member of the party. The couple had two children, Sanjay and Rajiv. However, the two parents were estranged from each other for much of their marriage. Indira's mother had died in the mid-1930s, and thereafter she often acted as her father's hostess for events and accompanied him on his travels.

The Congress Party came to power when her father took office in 1947, and Gandhi became a member of its working committee in 1955. In 1959 she was elected to the largely honorary post of party president. She was made a member of the Rajya Sabha (upper chamber of the Indian parliament) in 1964, and that year Lal Bahadur Shastri—who had succeeded Nehru as prime minister—named her minister of information and broadcasting in his government.

On Shastri's sudden death in January 1966, Gandhi was named leader of the Congress Party—and thus also became prime minister—in a compromise between the party's right and left wings. Her leadership, however, came under continual challenge from the right wing of the party, led by former minister of finance Morarji Desai. She won a seat in the 1967 elections to the Lok Sabha (lower chamber of the Indian parliament), but the Congress Party managed to win only a slim majority of seats, and Gandhi had to accept Desai as deputy prime minister.

Tensions grew within the party, however, and in 1969 she was expelled from it by Desai and other members of the old guard. Undaunted, Gandhi, joined by a majority of party members, formed a new faction around her called the "New" Congress Party. In the 1971 Lok Sabha elections the New Congress group won a sweeping electoral victory over a coalition of conservative parties. Gandhi strongly supported East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in its secessionist conflict with Pakistan in late 1971, and India's armed forces achieved a swift and decisive victory over Pakistan that led to the creation of Bangladesh. She became the first government leader to recognize the new country.

In March 1972, buoyed by the country's success against Pakistan, Gandhi again led her New Congress Party group to landslide victories in a large number of elections to state legislative assemblies. Shortly afterward, however, her defeated Socialist Party opponent from the 1971 national election charged that she had violated the election laws in that contest. In June 1975 the High Court of Allahabad ruled against her, which meant that she would be deprived of her seat in the parliament and would be required to stay out of politics for six years. She appealed the ruling to the Supreme Court but did not receive a satisfactory response. Taking matters into her own hands, she declared a state of emergency throughout India, imprisoned her political opponents, and assumed emergency powers. Many new laws were enacted that limited personal freedoms. During that period, she also implemented several unpopular policies, including large-scale sterilization as a form of birth control.

Public opposition to Gandhi's two years of emergency rule was vehement and widespread, and after it ended in early 1977, the released political rivals were

determined to oust her and the New Congress Party from power. When long-postponed national parliamentary elections were held later in 1977, she and her party were soundly defeated, whereupon she left office. The Janata Party (precursor to the Bharatiya Janata Party) took over the reins of government, with newly recruited member Desai as prime minister.

In early 1978 Gandhi and her supporters completed the split from the Congress Party by forming the Congress (I) Party—the "I" signifying Indira. She was briefly imprisoned (October 1977 and December 1978) on charges of official corruption. Despite those setbacks, she won a new seat in the Lok Sabha in November 1978, and her Congress (I) Party began to gather strength. Dissension within the ruling Janata Party led to the fall of its government in August 1979. When new elections for the Lok Sabha were held in January 1980, Gandhi and Congress (I) were swept back into power in a landslide victory. Her son Sanjay, who had become her chief political adviser, also won a seat in the Lok Sabha. All legal cases against Indira, as well as against Sanjay, were withdrawn.Sanjay Gandhi's death in an airplane crash in June 1980 eliminated Indira's chosen successor from the political leadership of India. After Sanjay's death, Indira groomed her other son, Rajiv, for the leadership of her party. She adhered to the quasi-socialist policies of industrial development that had been begun by her father. She established closer relations with the Soviet Union, depending on that country for support in India's long-standing conflict with Pakistan.

During the early 1980s Indira Gandhi was faced with threats to the political integrity of India. Several states sought a larger measure of independence from the central government, and Sikh separatists in Punjab state used violence to assert their demands for an autonomous state. In 1982 a large number of Sikhs, led by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, occupied and fortified the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) complex at Amritsar, the Sikhs' holiest shrine. Tensions between the government and the Sikhs escalated, and in June 1984 Gandhi ordered the Indian army to attack and oust the separatists from the complex. Some buildings in the shrine were badly damaged in the fighting, and at least 450 Sikhs were killed (Sikh estimates of the death toll were considerably higher). Five months later Gandhi was killed in her garden in New Delhi in a fusillade of bullets fired by two of her own Sikh bodyguards in revenge for the attack in Amritsar. She was succeeded as prime minister by her son Rajiv, who served until 1989.

6.4 WOMEN MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN INDIA

After India gained independence from British rule in 1947, it was the Congress party that came to power and formed the Government. The government made certain attempts to fulfill the promises it had made to women during the pre-independence period, and also in the initial period after independence.

While framing the Constitution of India, it included the very important aspect of equality of men and women in all spheres of life. Article 14 of the Constitution of India states that, "The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India".

Article 15 states that "The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, sex, place of birth or any of them." Article 15(3) states that "Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children".

Article 16 states that "There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State".

According to Veena Majumdar, "The Constitutions radical departure from inherited social values represented to women of that generation its greatest intrinsic quality.

For the women … with definite memories of pre-independence society and of the freedom struggle, the acceptance of gender equality in the constitution was the fulfillment of a dream of women's entitlement to an independent identity."

A number of administrative bodies were set up for the creation of opportunities for women. A number of women were inducted into the government.

In the two decades that followed, 1950s and 1960s, there was a lull in the activities of feminists and in the women's movements in India. Women, however, started realizing that the constitutional promise of equality did not by itself resolve the equality ques-tions, especially in a country as diverse as India, which comprises different religions and cultures.

The challenge of addressing inequality within women remains till this day. The women's movement has not been able to "decommunalise" the issue. Women's organizations and feminists did not know how to deal with the problems of women belonging to different religious groups. By the time the feminist movement stepped into the 1970s, minority identities had begun to harden. This divisive environment affected Muslim women.

Religious fundamentalists tried to place the onus of preserving religio-cultural identity on women. This identity syndrome, with women in the center, diverted attention away from Muslim women's grim realities and the deviations from the actual Islamic position.

Having been a secular movement, the women's movement found itself facing a difficult challenge that it did not know how to handle. On the conceptual level, Indian

feminists were in a dilemma: how to assimilate Muslim women's issues into broader feminist issues and, at the same time, safeguard their religious and cultural identity. This has been most obvious in the case of Muslim Personal Law. Placing Muslim women's issues within the confines of religion has further marginalized them, and created hesitancy among the secular feminists in addressing their problems for fear of hurting religious sentiments.The 1970s also witnessed the split of the Indian Left Front. This led to a number of doubts regarding their earlier analysis of revolution. New Leftist movements and ideas emerged. A few streams of feminist movements also developed, such as the Shahada movement, which was a Bhil tribal landless laborer's movement against the exploitation of the tribal landless laborers by non-tribal landowners. It began as a folk protest, and became militant with the involvement of the New Left party.

It has been said that women were more active in the movement, and as their militancy increased, they demanded direct action on issues specific to them as

women, such as physical violence and abuse as a result of alcoholism.Groups of women would go from village to village, enter liquor dens and destroy liquor pots and containers. If any woman reported physical abuse by her husband, all other women would surround him, beat him up and force him to apolo-gize to his wife in public.

The formation of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) was probably the first attempt made to form a Trade Union attached to the Textile Labor Union in Ahmedabad. It was formed in 1972 at the initiative of Ela Bhatt, and was an organization of women who were involved in different trades, but shared a number of common features and work experiences—low earnings, extremely poor working conditions (some worked at home, and others toiled on streets as vendors or hawkers), harassment from those in authority (contractors, police, and so on), and lack of recognition of their efforts as socially useful work.SEWA aimed at improving the working conditions of women through a pro-cess of training, technical aid, legal literacy, collective bargaining, and to teach values of honesty, dignity and simplicity, the Gandhian goals to which SEWA subscribes.

The anti-price rise agitations in Maharashtra were the direct result of the drought and famine conditions that affected rural Maharashtra in the early 1970s. These led to a sharp price rise in urban Maharashtra. In 1973, the United Women's Anti-Price Rise Front was formed to mobilize women against inflation.

Within no time, it fires balled into a mass women's movement for consumer protection and the demand was for the gov-ernment to fix minimum prices and to distribute essential commodities. Huge groups of women, between 10,000 and 20,000, would hold demonstrations at government offices, houses of Members of Parliament and merchants, and those who could not get out of their homes would express their support by beating thalis (metal plates) with lathis or belans (rolling pins).This movement spread to Gujarat, where it was called the Nav Nirman movement. In Gujarat, the movement started as a student's movement against spiraling costs, corruption and black marketeering. Soon, it became a massive middle- class movement and thousands of women joined it. The methods included mock courts where judgments were passed on corrupt state officials and politicians, mock funeral processions, and processions to greet

6.5 FORMATION AND FUNCTIONS OF SELF HELP GROUP

Empowerment of women is sinqua non to achieve the goals of social development. It is necessary that women must be brought in the main stream of national development. Programmes by empowering them to discharge all types of roles. Empowerment of women cannot be ignored. While devising various policies for socio-economic development. The economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of an economy's level of development. This does not mean that economic development necessarily results in improving the women who constitute about 50 percent of the population.

Empowerment is the recent approach articulated by the third world countries women. It seeks to meet women's strategic gender needs due to their

subordinate position to men, through bottom up mobilization aroundpractical gender need according to their accepted role in society. It aims at increasing women's power in terms of their self-reliance and internal strength to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change. The empowerment of women through SHGs would lead benefits not only to the individual women but also for the family and community as a whole through collection action the development. These SHGs have collection action. Empowering women is not just for meeting their economic needs but also more holistic social development. The SHGs empower women and train them to take active part in socio-economic progress of the nation.

The origin of self-help group can be traced is from Grameen bank of Bangladesh, which was founded by Mohamed Yunus. SGHs were started and formed in 1975. In India NABARD initiated in 1986-1987. The absence of institutional credits available in the rural area has led to the establishment of SHGs. The concept of self help groups has been evolved to organize the rural poor to meet their productive and consumption needs out of their saving.

India has adopted the Bangladesh model in a modified form. To alleviate the poverty and empower the women. The micro-finance has emerged as powerful instrument in the new economy. With availability of micro-finance, self-help grou (SHGs) and credit management groups have also started in India. And thus the movement of SHG has spread out in India. In 1991-92 Nabard started promoting self help groups an a large scale. And it was the real take off point for the SHGs movement. In 1993, the Reserve Bank of India also allowed SHGs to open saving accounts in banks facility of availing bank services was a major boost to the movement.

The concept of SHG was not new to Maharastra. Beginning with a tiny amount of only 25 paise, the women of Maharashtra from Amaravati District had established on SHG long back in 1947. Further in 1988, 'Chaitanya' Gramin Mahila Bal Yuvak Sanstha started promoting SHGs in Pune District, informally. In Southern part of India, 'SADHAN', 'DHAN' foundation and 'ASA' worked to promote SHGs. But their thrust was on economic aspect only. Whereas in Maharashtra, the NGOs not only have catered to the economic needs of the participants, but also involved in the process of social development. Aim of 'Chaitanya' is also the same to empower the women in both ways, economically and socially. Presently, numerous NGOs and governmental institutions promote SHGs on a large scale.

a) Meaning of Self-Help Group (SHG):

SHG is a holistic programme of micro-enterprises covering all aspects of self-employment, organization of the rural poor into self Help groups and their capacity building, planning of activity clusters, infrastructure build up, technology, credit and marketing.

It lays emphasis on activity clusters based on the resources and the occupational skills of the people and availability of markets.Self-Help Group refers to self-governed, peer controlled, informal group of people with same socio-economic background and having a desire to collectively perform common purposes. Here poor people voluntarily come together to save whatever amount they can save conveniently out of their earnings, to mutually agree to contribute to a common fund and to lend to the members for meeting their productive and emergent needs.

SHGs have been able to mobilize small savings either on weekly or monthly basis from persons who were not expected to have any savings. They have been able to effectively recycle the resources generated among the members for meeting the emergent credit needs of members of the group.SHG is a group formed by the community women, which has specific number of members like 15 or 20. In such a group the poorest women would come together for emergency, disaster, social reasons, economic support to each other have ease of conversation, social interaction and economic interaction.
A SHG is an informal association to enhance the member's financial security as primary focus and other common interest of members such as area development, awareness, motivation, leadership, training and associating in other social inter-mediation programmes for the benefit of the entire community.

b) Need of Self-Help Group (SHG):

The very existence of SHGs is highly relevant to make the people of below poverty line hopeful and self-reliant. SHGs enable them to Increase their income, improve their standard of living and status in society. It acts as a catalyst for bringing this section of society to the main stream.Ultimately, the nation reaps the advantages of socialism.

The Government of India and various state Governments have been implementing various programmes for rural upliftment. However, rural poverty and unemployment still persist in the country. This problem is becoming severe and acute. The available latest statistics relating to the Indian Economy indicates that about 26% of the total population in the country belongs to the rural poor.

Considering the gravity and intensity of the problem, many Voluntary Development Organisations (VDOs) have come forward with different programmes for the rural poor in the country. These agencies undertake various innovative programmes and schemes to address the issues of poverty and unemployment prevailing in our country.

c) Objectives of SHG:

1. To inculcate the savings and banking habits among members.

2. To secure them from financial, technical and moral strengths.

3. To enable availing of loan for productive purposes.

4. To gain economic prosperity through loan/credit.

5. To gain from collective wisdom in organising and managing their own finance and distributing the benefits among themselves.

6. To sensitize women of target area for the need of SHG and its relevance in their empowerment.

7. To create group feeling among women.

8. To enhance the confidence and capabilities of women.

9. To develop collective decision making among women.

10. To encourage habit of saving among women and facilitate the accumulation of their own capital resource base.

11. To motivate women taking up social responsibilities particularly related to women development.

12. It acts as the forum for members to provide space and support to each other.

SHGs are considered as one of the most significant tools to adopt participatory approach for the economic empowerment of women, SHG is a group of people that meets regularly to discuss issues of interest to them and to look at solutions of commonly experienced problems. The group may or may not be promoted by Government or non-Government institutions.

The SHGs broadly go through three stages of evolution such as:

I. Group formation.
II. Capital formation (through the revolving fund).
III. Skill development and taking up of economic activity for income generation.

As SHG are formed under the Swarna Jayanti Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), for SHGs subsidy would be 50 percent of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.25 lakh or per capital subsidy of Rs. 10,000 which-ever is less. There is no monetary ceiling on subsidy for minor irrigation projects for SHGs as well as individual swarojgaris (self-employed).

The SHGs may consist of 10-20 members and in case of minor irrigation, and in case of disabled persons and difficult areas, i.e. hilly, desert and sparsely populated areas, this number may be a minimum of five. Self Help Groups should also be drawn from the BPL list approved by the Gram Sabha.

Since the inception of the programme of SGSY (1st April, 1999) 22.52 lakh self-help groups have been formed covering 66.97 lakh swarojgaries. These include 35.54 lakh members of the SHGs and 31.43 lakh Individual swarojgaries who have been assisted with a total investment of Rs. 14403.73 crore. Out of total swarojgaries assisted, SCs/STs were 45.54 percent and women 47.85 percent. During 2006-07, the central allocation scheme Is Rs. 1200 crore

6.6 LET US SUM UP

Empowerment of woman is a crucial factor in the eradication of poverty, as the woman are the key contribution to the economic at all levels woman participation combating poverty though both remunerative and un-remunerative work at home and the work place the formation of self-help groups has provided a lot of confidence among members of self-help groups. A large member of woman in the country is gaining self- 7 reliance with the help of self-help groups. In India, self-help groups represent a unique approach to financial inclusion. Self-help groupsMicrofinance activities helps the poor, women is not just obtaining loans but also inculcating in them habits of savings, credit and investing in micro insurance and money transfer services.

Members of self-help groups participate and improving access to micro credit management, marketing skills, and capacity building to promote financial inclusion, and empowerment. Kudumbashree (prosperity of the family) is an ambitious poverty alleviation and women empowerment programme started by Government of Kerala in 1999 with the aim of eradicating absolute poverty. Under this programme, women empowerment was seen as the key to bring out families of the poverty trap and micro credit activities through self-help groups.

6.7 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Discuss the importance of Self-Help Group in uplifting the financial status of India.

6.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Self-help groups programme proved that it is an effective tool for poverty alleviation programme. HGs which poor need for their basic requirement is not available in the formal credit system. In these circumstances, HGsservices not only fulfill their productive needs but also satisfy their consumption needs. Overall HGs can help low income people to reduce risk, improve financial activities, raise productivity, increase their income and improve the quality of their lives and empower them for economic growth in India. SHGs Programmes have become a popular mechanism for poverty alleviation, financial inclusion in many developing countries including India.

Microfinance and self-help groups activities has been long recognized and practiced in India as a toll for extending banking services to poor and at the same time financially inclusion of weaker section of the society.

As SHG are formed under the Swarna Jayanti Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), for SHGs subsidy would be 50 percent of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.25 lakh or per capital subsidy of Rs. 10,000 which-ever is less. There is no monetary ceiling on subsidy for minor irrigation projects for SHGs as well as individual swarojgaris (self-employed).

While devising various policies for socio-economic development. The economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of an economy's level of development. This does not mean that economic development necessarily results in improving the women who constitute about 50 percent of the population.

6.9SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Sen I., Women's Politics in India. In Maitrayee Chaudhuri (Ed.), Feminism in India, Kali for Women and Women Unlimited, New Delhi (2004)
2. Shah G., Social Movements in India: A Review of Literature, Sage Publications, New Delhi (1990)
3. Fouillet C. and Augsburg B. 2007. "Spread of the Self-Help Groups Banking Linkage Programme in India", International Conference on Rural Finance Research: Moving Results, held by FAO and IFAD, Rome, March 19-21

UNIT VII - GOVERNMENT OF INDIA POLICIES FOR WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

Structure

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio-economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them. Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on ground s of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantee equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Articles 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39(a), 39(b), 39(c) and 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss Policies for Women's Development in India
- understand the state efforts of state and central government measures
- describe the movements that worked for women after independence

7.3 POLICIES FOR WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENTIN INDIA

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing various schemes/programmes for empowerment of women and development of children across the country. The details of those schemes are as follows:

For Women empowerment:

I. BetiBachaoBetiPadhao (BBBP), a comprehensive programme is being implemented to address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of empowerment of women over a life-cycle continuum.

II. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), {erstwhile Maternity Benefit Programme} has been contributing towards better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and nursing mothers.

III. Scheme for Adolescent Girls aims at girls in the age group 11-18, to empower and improve their social status through nutrition, life skills, home skills and vocational training.

IV. Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra scheme, promote community participation through involvement of Student Volunteers for empowerment of rural women.

V. National Creche Scheme to provide day care facilities to children of age group of 6 months to 6 years of working women who are employed.

VI. Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) to provide micro-credit to poor women for various livelihood support and income generating activities at concessional terms in a client-friendly procedure to bring about their socio-economic development.

VII. SwadharGreh to provide relief and rehabilitation to destitute women and women in distress.

VIII. Ujjawala, a Comprehensive Scheme for prevention of trafficking and for rescue, rehabilitation, re-integration and repatriation of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.

IX. Working Women Hostels for ensuring safe accommodation for women working away from their place of residence. Under this scheme, 2 new proposals have been received and 2 sanctioned in Himachal Pradesh during last three years.

X. Schemes of One Stop Centre (OSC) and Women Helpline (WH) are being implemented to facilitate access to an integrated range of services including medical aid, police assistance, legal aid/ case management, psychosocial counseling and temporary support services to women affected by violence.

XI. Gender Budgeting Scheme is being implemented as a tool for mainstreaming gender perspective at various stages of planning, budgeting, implementation, impact assessment and revisiting of policy/programme objectives and allocations. The Scheme helps in strengthening of institutional mechanisms and training of various stakeholders so as to mainstream gender concerns in Central and State Governments.

For Child Development

XII. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is being implemented through States/UTs with the aim of holistic development of children upto 6 years of age and to meet nutritional needs of pregnant women and lactating mothers.

XIII. Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) (now Child protection Services) is being implemented through the State Government/UT Administrations to create a safe and secure environment for overall development of children in need of care and protection in urban and semi-urban areas.

XIV. National Nutrition Mission (NNM): The Government of India has approved setting up of National Nutrition Mission (NNM) commencing from 2017-18. The NNM, as an apex body, will monitor, supervise, fix targets and guide the nutrition related interventions across the Ministries. The programme through the targets will strive to

reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight babies.

7.3STATE ANDCENTRAL GOVERNMENTMEASURES

7.4.1 Central Government Measures

For an Indian woman and citizen, freedom does not just mean those guaranteed under the Constitution. It also means more jobs, opportunities for entrepreneurship, increased safety, ease in day-to-day living, and protection of the girl child. In short, the road to women's empowerment has several factors dotting its path. To ensure women are empowered, the government and the public sector need to play important roles to enable their welfare in various sectors. Whether it's providing free cooking gas and education schemes or enabling women to leverage technology, a slew of schemes has been launched in recent years to empower women to be independent in their lives.

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.

- Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, Plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.
- India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. Key among them is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.
- The Mexico Plan of Action (1975), the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985), the Beijing Declaration as well as the Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome Document adopted by the UNGA Session on Gender Equality and Development & Peace for the 21st century, titled "Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action" have been unreservedly endorsed by India for appropriate follow up.
- The Government of India attempted to gender sensitise the Budget initially through the Women's Component Plan (by state governments also) and then more intensively with Gender Responsive Budgeting institutionalized through the Gender Budget Statement published every

year since 2005 - 2006 with the Union Budget (in some states as well). This highlights the budgetary allocations for 100 percent women specific programmes (Part A) and those programmes in which at least 30 percent flows to women (Part B) in the annual expenditure budget.

- The women's movement and a wide-spread network of non-Government Organisations which have strong grass-roots presence and deep insight into women's concerns have contributed in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women.

Gender disparity

However, there still exists a wide gap between the goals enunciated in the Constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes, and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other. This has been analyzed extensively in the Report of the High-level Committee on the Status of Women in India, 2015.

Gender disparity manifests itself in various forms, the most obvious being the trend of continuously declining female ratio in the population in the last few decades. Social stereotyping, violence at the domestic and societal levels, acute wage differentials and discrimination and continuing commodification in society are some of the other manifestations. Migration, skewed sex ratio, environmental degradation have added to the women's vulnerability

The underlying causes of gender inequality are related to social and economic structure, which is based on informal and formal norms, and practices.

Consequently, the access of women particularly those belonging to weaker sections including Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/ Other backward Classes and minorities, majority of whom are in the rural areas and in the informal, unorganized sector – to education, health and productive resources, among others, is inadequate. Therefore, they remain largely marginalized, poor and socially excluded.

The government has recognised these paradoxes and attempted to address these in policies, legislation and programmes. Development programmes introduced to bring gender equality have produced mixed results. Legislative changes have faced resistance in their implementation due to social, cultural and religious mores.

The government will soon come out with a women empowerment index that would rank all states and union territories on at least half a dozen indices pertaining to women.

India ranks 135 among 147 nations on women empowerment as per United Nations Human Development Index in 2015. The nationwide index proposed is expected to help India improve its ranking globally. The ranking will among other parameters include women participation in household decisions, working women in the state .

Legal Rights:

The series of liberal and progressive sounding legislation affecting women enacted in our country over the period of the last two decades, are the outcome of continuous struggles launched by women's group, sensitive lawyers and democratic right groups.

Legislations and decisions of various cases who guaranteed social justice to Indian women and helps in the ongoing schemes and strategies for empowerment of Indian women

LEGISLATIONS

1. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
An Act to provide in pursuance of the International Convention signed at New York on the 9th day of May, 1950, for the prevention of immoral traffic.

2. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961) (Amended in 1986)
An act that abolishes the dowry system practiced in Indian weddings and imposes penal charges on violation of the act. It discourages the taking or giving of dowry.

3. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
An act to prohibit indecent representation of women through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner and for the matters connected herewith or incidental there to. An amendment bill of this act is pending in Rajya Sabah.

4. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 (3 of 1988)
An act to provide for the more effective prevention of the commission of sati and its glorification and for matters connected herewith or incidental thereto, whereas sati or the burning or burying alive of widows or women is revolting to the feelings of human nature and is nowhere enjoyed by any of the religions of India as an imperative duty.

5. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
Act to provide for the more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the constitution that are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

6. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION and REDRESSAL) Act, 2013
An act to provide protection against sexual harassment of women at work place and for the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. It is applicable and enacted whereas sexual harassment results in violation of the fundamental rights of a woman to equality under article 14 and 15 of the constitution of India and her right to life and to live with dignity under article 21 of the constitution and right to practice any profession or to carry on any occupation,

trade or business which includes a right to safe environment free from sexual harassment.

7. The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of misuse) Act 1994

An Act to provide for the regulation of the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for the purpose of detecting genetic or metabolic disorders or chromosomal abnormalities or certain congenital malformations or sex-linked disorders and for the prevention of the misuse of such techniques for the purpose of pre-natal sex determination leading to female foeticide; and, for matters connected there with or incidental thereto.

8.The criminal law (amendment) Bill, 2013

This legislation is the result of a protest against Delhi rape case also known as Nirbhaya case. This legislation provides amendment in Indian penal code, Code of Criminal Procedure and Indian evidence act on laws related to sexual offences. This bill introduces and amended offenses like acid attack, act with intent to disrobe a woman, voyeurism, stalking & sexual harassment into the Indian penal code.

9.Women's Reservation Bill (The Constitution 108th Amendment Bill)

It proposes to amend the Constitution of India to reserve one-third of all seats in the Lok Sabha, and in all state legislative assemblies for women. The Rajya Sabha passed the bill but the Lok Sabha has not yet voted on the bill. This will be helpful in increasing the political participation of women.

10.The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

This major piece of legislation deal with the equal rights in employment for women workers. This act was implemented in the International women's year on the demand for equality in employment voiced by working women.

7.4.2 State Government Measures:

We will see the schemes which are state aided and particularly implemented in a particular state of country.

Schemes implemented in various states

a) Uttarakhand-

The state of Uttarakhand has come up with many schemes for the women's residing in the state. These schemes are:

1. Uttarakhand Women Integrated Development Scheme

With the aim to reduce the workload in daily life of women, To develop decision making capacity in women, To create understanding amongst women on Panchayati Raj System and Women self-employment. Government of Uttarakhand came up with this scheme in 2003 but because of the change in government this scheme is pending.

2.Nanda Devi KanyaDhanYojna

This scheme provides monitory aid to the women on the birth of girl child with the objective to reduce gender discrimination and to stop female feticide.

b) West Bengal-

West Bengal Legislative Assembly has passed the West Bengal Panchayat Election Bill, 2012 which provides 50% reservation for women, in elections ensuring the equal participation of women in the politics.

c) Gujarat-

The state of Gujarat has come up with the fabulous schemes for the women empowerment including every sector. These schemes are:

1. Krishi TalimYojna

It is training in the field of Agriculture, imparted to Women Farmers and Farmers wives for Research and use of latest technology. These Agricultural women are paid stipend and transportation for the training course.

2. Sakhi Mandal Yojna

The Project is to enable the poor women, particularly in rural areas of Gujarat to improve their access to resources and consequently strengthen livelihoods and quality of life. Sakhi Mandals are formation of women self help groups based on thrift and credit principles. It provides financial services to accelerate the process of economic development and ensure welfare of women.

3. Nari Adalat

These are the courts in which women jurists dispense justice in women's cases of rape, dowry, abandonment etc. They solve these cases faster than the ordinary judicial courts.

4. Chiranjeevi Yojna

Under this scheme BPL families have been provided with all the costs and expanses on the delivery of a baby through a proper hospital.

5. Mahila Vrudh ashram

These are the exclusive old age homes made only for the women's.

6. Gaurav NariNiti

This schemes aims at the gender equality.

7. Fish entrepreneur yojna [4]

Through this scheme government encourages lower caste women to sell fishes and become self reliant. For this purpose all the resources and instruments are provided by Gujarat government on a 50 % subsidized rate.

d) Tamil Nadu-

Periyar EVR Nagammai Free Education Scheme has been implemented in the State from 1989-90 for women students, irrespective of caste, creed and community, to encourage their education and to reduce dropout rate. This is a major scheme in the field of women education in Tamil Nadu.

Apart from the state schemes many NGOs like Jaipur rugs foundation, SNEHA, Yuva Parivartan etc. are working in the field of women empowerment. These NGO's are providing educational facilities and vocational trainings to women in different areas.

7.5 SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Since half of the human population comprised of women, the process of creating an environment conducive to the progress of women is dependent on a multitude of socio-economic factors, starting with a political will to enforce the development of women as a priority. Both physical and mental well-being of an individual as well as the community plays a significant role in the socio-economic progress and development of any nation. To study or analyse the women's health condition in any state or country, a brief knowledge about some fundamental aspects of health is essential. Environmental aspects play a dominant role to determine health. Protective measures taken by the Government through legislation highlights the importance of women's health and the concern of the Government towards the welfare of its women.

The Independent India, made consolidated efforts to improve women's position in the society by legislative measures. Several acts were passed for the emancipation of women and children by the Government in the 20th century.

The need to bring women into the mainstream of development has been a national concern since Independence. Article 15 of the Constitution prohibits any discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex etc. Article 15(3), however, clarifies that this provision will not prevent the State from making any special provisions for women and children.

In the earlier phase of Indian planning, women's development concerns had a low profile. There were, however, some significant beginnings. A major initiative was the establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board in 1953 to promote and assist voluntary organisations in the field of women welfare, child welfare and welfare of the handicapped. Under the community development programme, Mahila Mandals were promoted and supported since the Second Plan. Some legislative measures were also undertaken to protect the interests of women as, for instance, the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956, the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.

The Third and the Fourth Plans accorded a high priority to education of women. Measures to improve maternal and child health services,

supplementary feeding for children and nursing and expectant mothers were introduced. The Fifth Plan supported economic development, employment and training for women as the principal focus for their socio-economic development. The main approach in these Planswas generally to view women as the beneficiaries of social services rather than as contributors to development.

The seventies brought women to the forefront of development concerns with the publication of the Report of the Committee on Status of Women in India, the observance of the International Women's Year in 1975 and the preparation of a National Plan of Action for Women. This decade also saw the enactment of important specific legislations like the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976. The creation of a separate Bureau of Women's Development and the setting up of a national committee with the Prime Minister as President were intended to provide strong administrative support to women's development. During the Sixth Plan, a multi-sectoral approach was adopted for women' s development and, for the first time, a coordinated picture was presented in the Plan. A separate Department of Women's Welfare was carved out at the Centre in 1985 from the then existing Ministry of Social and Women's Welfare to give a separate identity and to provide a nodal point on matters relating to women's development. Legislative measures were taken to provide protection to women against discrimination, exploitation, atrocities and violence. Various labour legislations were amended to safeguard the interests of women and provide for their welfare.

The efforts made during the various development plans have brought about perceptible improvement in the general socio-economic situation of women. Significant gains in respect of women's health status have been achieved. The expectancy of life at birth for females which was 31.6 years in 1951 was estimated to have risen to 59.1 years in 1986-91. The number of females for every 1,000 males consistently declined from 972 in 1901 to 930 in 1971. However, it increased slightly in 1981 to 934 but has dipped again to 929 in 1991. The infant mortality rate declined from 129 per 1000 live births in 1970 to 91 in 1989. More importantly, the sex differential which was quite high in the seventies has now been bridged. However, the 0-4 age specific mortality rate, which had significantly declined from 53.0 in 1970 to 33.3 in 1988, continues to show higher female mortality. The maternal mortality rate continues to be uncomfortably high. Age specific death rates for 1988 indicate higher death rate for females upto the age of 35 years. This differential is indicative of the continued neglect of the female child's health and nutrition needs, her early marriage, high fertility, poverty and inadequate access to health care.

Though there has been an increase in the age at marriage of girls, the proportion ot married girls in the age group 15-19 is still very high according to the 1981 census. Teenage mothers face higher risks in pregnancy and related health problems compared to those above 20 years of age. The marital fertility rate in the age group 20-29 years is very high, adversely affecting the woman's health and nutrition status. Most pregnant women from the poorer sections of society continue to suffer from anaemia. Underweight, toxaemia, bleeding during pregnancy, puerperal sepsis and under-nourishment are widely

prevalent. Birth of low-weight babies and high infant and maternal mortality are consequences of these factors.

In the field of education, the position is still not satisfactory. The 1991 Census data show that for the population aged 7 years and above, the percentage of female literates is only 39.42 compared to 29.75 in 1981. There is also considerable inter-State variation. Kerala, for instance, had a literacy rate of 86.93 per cent in 1991 of females above seven, as compared to 20.84 per cent in Rajasthan, 23.10 per cent in Bihar, 26.02percentinUttarPradeshand28.39 per cent in Madhya Pradesh. While the higher decadal growth rate of female literacy (66 per cent) as compared to male literacy (43 per cent) provides some consolation, the large demographic base has resulted in 197 million illiterate among females in the 7+ age group — an indication of the massive dimension of the problem of female illiteracy. This limits their achievements in the field of employment, training, utilisation of health facilities and exercise of their legal rights and is a cause of their continuing exploitation. Illiteracy among women is also negatively related to fertility rates and infant and child mortality rates.

The unemployment rate for females, according to the criterion of "usual principal status", was 3.52 per cent in rural areas and 8.77 per cent in urban areas in 1987-88 as compared to 1.41 per cent and 6.90 per cent respectively in 1983. The trend of increase in the incidence of open unemployment was stronger in the case of women than of men. Also, the differences between the "usual status" and the "daily status" unemployment rates are much larger in the case of women than of men, implying that under-employment constitutes a much higher proportion of the overall unemployment in the case of women. The estimated backlog of unemployment among women in 1990 by the criterion of "usual status" is 3.96 million. '

The 1991 census reported 91.397 million female workers (excluding Jammu and Kashmir), of whom 66.189 million were reported as main workers and 25.208 million as marginal workers. The percentage of female main workers to total main workers was 23.19 per cent. It was much lower in the urban areas. During the decade 1981-91, female workers in India increased by 42.26 per cent. The female work force participation rate was 22.69 in 1991 as compared to 19.77 in 1981. There is considerable inter-State variation in female work participation rate, Sikkim reporting 52.74 per cent as compared to only 6.78 per cent by Punjab. The work participation rate for females is higher in the rural areas (27.20%) than in the urban areas (9.74%). The distribution of rural female main workers shows that 38.58 per cent were cultivators, 48.83 per cent agricultural labourers and 12.59 per cent other workers.

The 1991 census took special care to ensure that women's participation in work is not left out and women-headed households are not under-enumerated. It is difficult to say to what extent the increase in work force participation rate is a reflection of these endeavours. The contribution of women to the economy continues to remain grossly under-reported due to certain conceptual, methodological and perception problems, reflecting a gender bias since economic value is not assigned to unpaid household work and various kinds of subsistence activities. Home-based production activities and unpaid family work also tend to be grossly under-reported, specially if this is of an intermittent character.

The overwhelming majority of women are engaged in the informal sector, which not only provides low returns but is also characterised by virtual inaccessibility to credit, technology, training and other facilities. Women have still not been recognised as producers in their own right. A large number of women employed as casual labourers in construction and other industries do not get the prescribed minimum wages, nor are the stipulated minimum hours of work adhered to. The traditional economic activities, which provide employment to women, have suffered in competition with the more advanced technologies. Home-based women workers hardly ever get the protective coverage of labour laws. The present crisis of fuel and water has increased further the burden on women. There are about 30 per cent rural households headed by women who bear all the burden of earning and caring for the families and suffer on account of lack of access to means of production and ownership of land and other property.

Despite the constitutional guarantees and specific legislations to protect the interests of women, they continue to suffer because of ignorance of their legal rights, strong social resistance to giving women their due share, lack of legal aid facilities and near-absence of strong women's groups in rural areas which can protect their interests. Socio-cultural traditions continue to assign a subordinate role to women, particularly in rural areas, subjecting the girl child to discrimination of various kinds, including the killing of unborn female foetus after prenatal sex determination tests. The menace of dowry continues unabated, despite the legislation prohibiting dowry and prescribing stringent measures for violating the law. Violence against women, including that in the domestic sphere, continues to brutalise their existence as evident from rape and dowry-related cruelty and murder cases. For instance, out of 9,752 rape cases reported in 1989, the victims were below 10 years of age in 369 cases. There were 4,205 reported cases of dowry related deaths.

7.6 LET US SUM UP

Thinking on development has shifted repeatedly over the past forty years. So has thinking on women in development. This shift in thinking coincides with a growing concern about the lack of progress observed in improving the quality of life for women viz a viz men over the past few decades. This leads one to suggest that the past shifts in development thinking have not been of much help to women.

Women around the world share a common condition; they are not full and equal participants in public policy choices that affect their lives. Nowhere is the gap between de jure and de facto equality among men and women greater than in the area of decision making. The top decision-making position remain largely male dominated spheres where women have little influence.

The lack of women's participation in political decision making has important consequences. It deprives women of important rights and responsibilities as citizens, and excludes their perspectives and interests from policy making and decision making. Their voices are missing from key decisions on national budgets and setting of government priorities. Their skills and viewpoint often remain unheard, underrepresented or ignored.

India as a country is still recovering from years of abuse in the time of the Raj and more years of economic suffering at the hands of the License Raj. It is only now that globalization, liberalization and other socio-economic forces have given some respite to a large proportion of the population. However, there are still quite a few areas where women empowerment in India is largely lacking.

To truly understand what women empowerment is, there needs to be a sea-change in the mind-set of the people in the country. Not just the women themselves, but the men have to wake up to a world that is moving towards equality and equity. It is better that this is embraced earlier rather than later, for our own good.

We have many schemes, many programs for the purpose of women empowerment at every stage of administration, all we need is a good system and agencies for the implementation of these policies and programs. And if we can build up that system, if we can implement these programs then the goal of women empowerment can be achieved very easily through these programs.

Swami Vivekananda once said "arise away and stop not until the goal is reached". Thus our country should thus be catapulted into the horizon of empowerment of women and revel in its glory.

We have a long way to go, but we will get there someday. We shall overcome.

SUGGESTIONS

- Proper awareness for laws should be there that is law should not be restricted to papers only but the implementation of law should be there so that every woman can be familiar with her rights. Significant steps should be taken to implement all the laws which are amended to facilitate detention, prevention and punishment of crimes against women.
- Women education has to be made compulsory and women should be encouraged to become literate because without being educated women cannot have a access to her right.
- Strict implementation of the schemes and policies for women empowerment should be done.
- Awareness camps for women should be organized where they can become familiar with the framed schemes and policies and can take benefit of those schemes and policies.

7.7 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1.Elaborate on the measures taken by states to ensure women welfare.
2.List few legislative policies designed for women empowerment

7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Schemes implemented in various states - Uttarakhand Women Integrated Development Scheme, with the aim to reduce the workload in daily life of women, To develop decision making capacity in women, To create understanding amongst women on Panchayati Raj System and Women self-employment. Government of Uttarakhand came up with this scheme in 2003 but because of the change in government this scheme is pending.Nanda Devi

KanyaDhanYojna, this scheme provides monitory aid to the women on the birth of girl child with the objective to reduce gender discrimination and to stop female feticide.West Bengal Legislative Assembly has passed the West Bengal Panchayat Election Bill, 2012 which provides 50% reservation for women, in elections ensuring the equal participation of women in the politics.

The state of Gujarat has come up with the fabulous schemes for the women empowerment including every sector. These schemes are:It is training in the field of Agriculture, imparted to Women Farmers and Farmers wives for Research and use of latest technology. These Agricultural women are paid stipend and transportation for the training course.**Sakhi Mandal Yojna** - The Project is to enable the poor women, particularly in rural areas of Gujarat to improve their access to resources and consequently strengthen livelihoods and quality of life. Sakhi Mandals are formation of women self-help groups based on thrift and credit principles. It provides financial services to accelerate the process of economic development and ensure welfare of women.**Nari Adalat -** These are the courts in which women jurists dispense justice in women's cases of rape, dowry, abandonment etc. They solve these cases faster than the ordinary judicial courts.**Chiranjeevi Yojna -** Under this scheme BPL families have been provided with all the costs and expenses on the delivery of a baby through a proper hospital.

Periyar EVR Nagammai Free Education Scheme has been implemented in the State from 1989-90 for women students, irrespective of caste, creed and community, to encourage their education and to reduce dropout rate. This is a major scheme in the field of women education in Tamil Nadu.Apart from the state schemes many NGOs like Jaipur rugs foundation, SNEHA, Yuva Parivartan etc. are working in the field of women empowerment. These NGO's are providing educational facilities and vocational trainings to women in different areas.

7.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Plans and Prospects of Social Welfare in India (1951-1961), Report of the Planning Commission, Government of India, Delhi, 1963.
2. Status of Women in India, Synopsis of the Report of the National Committee on the Status of Women (1971-1974), The Indian Council of Social Science Research, Allied Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1975.
3. AsimaSahu, Women's Liberation and Human Rights, Printer Publishers, Jaipur, 2000.
4. Chattopadhyaya, B. D., Kum Kum Roy, Readings in Early Indian History, Women in Early Indian Societies, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1999.
5. Ganesamurthy, V. S., Empowerment of Women in India, Social, Economic and Political, New Century Publications, New Delhi, 2008

UNIT VIII –CONSTITUTIONAL LAWS FOR WOMEN

Structure

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The Indian Constitution has embodied within itself grounds for gender equality. The Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles together work towards shaping policies and putting safeguards not just for women empowerment in India but also protection.

The father of the nation says something similar,

"To call a woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then the woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater powers of endurance, has she not greater courage? Without her, a man could not be. If nonviolence is the law of our being, the future is with a woman. Who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman?" – Mahatma Gandhi

8.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand Legislative laws to Women and their constitutional rights.
- Analyze the importance of different laws pertaining to women.
- Describe the status of women protection and development

8.3 CONSTITUTIONAL LAWS RELATING TO WOMEN

Women's Rights Under Indian Constitution

Under the constitution women are provided with the following fundamental rights:

Article 21

Article 21 states as follows: "No person except according to the procedure established by law shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty. Fundamental right under Article 21 of the object personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law is to prevent encroachment on and loss of life." - Anyone, including women, can seek protection under this.

Article 15(1)

The Article 15(1) states as follows: This Article guarantees Right to Equality, "The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth."

Article 19

The Article 19 states as follows: This gives the citizens (which include both women, men and third gender) the Right to Freedom, which among other things guarantees freedom of speech and expression, freedom of movement, freedom of practising trade and profession etc.

Article 32

Article 32 states as follows: This Article gives the right to us to seek constitutional remedies through the Supreme Court of India for violation of Fundamental Rights mainly.

Article 15(3)

According to Article 15(3) - State can make any special provision for women and children without any hurdles or obligations.

Article 16(2)

According to Article 16(2), No citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated in respect of employment or office under the State.

Article 23(1)

The Article 23(1) prohibits the practice of human trafficking in India.

Article 39(a)

As per Article 39(a) men & women have the right to an adequate means to livelihood.

Constitutional Laws for women related to Panchayats & Municipality

As per Article 243D(3) Not less than one third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women.

As per Article 243-D(4) One-third of the total number of offices of chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women

As per Article 243-T(3) One-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women

As per Article 243-T(4) offices of chairpersons in the Municipalities shall be reserved for women in such manner as the State Legislature may provide

Along with constitutional safeguards, there are further rights that women have guaranteed under the law.

8.3.1 Labour Laws

Section 19 of the Factories Act, 1948 requires construction of separate latrines and urinals for women.

Section 22 of the said Act provides that no woman shall be required to clean, lubricate or adjust any part of a prime mover, or any transmission machinery while in motion.

Section 27 of the said Act provides that no woman shall be employed in any part of a factory for pressing cotton in which a cotton opener is at work. Section 48 thereof lays down that in every factory wherein more than 30 women workers are employed, there shall be provided and maintained a suitable room for the use of the children (under the age of 6 years) of such women.

Sections 4 and 5 of the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provide for equal remuneration for equal work to male and female workers for performing works of similar nature and prohibits discrimination in matters of recruitment of men and women which discrimination if carried out is punishable with imprisonment which shall not be less than three months but which can extend upto one year and fine.

It may next be noted that as per Section 4 of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 no woman shall work in any establishment during six weeks immediately following the day of her delivery or mis-carriage. Furthermore, during the period of her pregnancy, a woman shall not be required to do any job of arduous nature or which involves long hours of standing, or any task, which is likely to interfere with her pregnancy.

Section 5 of the said Act further lays down that a pregnant mother is entitled to 12 weeks leave with full pay i.e. six weeks before and six weeks after the date of birth of child. Furthermore, if she works at least 80 days during the period of one year, she is entitled to full pay leave even in the event of miscarriage.

In view of the judgment of the Honble Supreme Court arising out of Writ Petition (Criminal) Nos. 666-70 of 1992 and Criminal Misc. Petition Nos. 7021-31 of 1992 titled Vishaka and Others versus State of Rajasthan and others, the Haryana Government has provided for establishment of a Complaints Committee which is to be headed by a woman and not less than half of its members are to be females. Such complaints committee will adopt its own methodology for conducting an enquiry into complaints of sexual harassment as speedily and discreetly as possible and furthermore no preliminary enquiry is required to be conducted by the competent authority against a delinquent official when the Complaints Committee records its satisfaction of sexual harassment having been committed by him.

In the said instructions sexual harassment has been defined as under: -

(a)Physical contact and advances;

(b)A demand or request for sexual favours;

(c)Sexually coloured remarks;

(d)Showing pornography

(e)Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

The foregoing discussion would reveal that the Governments have from time to time done their bit for ameliorating the lot of women but laws alone in themselves will not be of much consequence unless women for whose benefit these have been enacted also rise to the occasion and assert their rights firmly, whenever and wherever their rights are either ignored or suppressed or trampled upon.

8.3.2 Property Rights

Gone are the days when women in India faced discrimination in matters of property ownership. In the past, married women have had limited rights to their parental property, and the widows were invariably at the mercy of their sons. This is changing now. The government has been taking a number of progressive steps to promote property holding among women in recent times. Offering home loans at concessional rates and keeping stamp duty charges lower for women are some such steps. In fact, the Centre has been trying to empower women's property rights through various amendments to legislation.

Section 14 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, declares, "Any property possessed by a female Hindu, whether acquired before or after the commencement of this Act, shall be held by her as full owner thereof and not as a limited owner." This makes women absolute owners of their properties. However, not many women are aware of their rights; there is a misconception that women enjoy only limited rights over property, besides numerous other restrictions.

The Act was amended in 2005 to give equal rights to women. The amended Act, which came into effect on September 9, 2005, is applicable to the various sects and castes of Hindus, apart from Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains.

Prior to the amendment, a woman had no right to a joint ownership or coparcenary property. Section 6 of the amended Act talks about the devolution of interest in coparcenary properties. Now, a daughter becomes an owner of the coparcenary property by birthright in the same manner as a son does. Widows are also entitled to claim a share equal to that of their children at the time of distribution of the joint family property among the sons.

Section 8 and 9 of the Act deal with the devolution of property in case of the death of a male, while Section 15 and 16 deal with the devolution of property in case a woman dies. The order of succession in the event of a woman's death gives the heirs of her husband a preference to her own parents. But in case of a man, his relatives get to inherit the property. To empower women better, the laws need to be made gender-neutral, and there should be no distinction between the order of succession and rules of succession for men and women.

Schedule IX of the Indian Constitution lists the various laws beyond the scope of judicial review. It also contains Zaminadari Abolition and Land Reforms Acts (ZALR) of various states that govern agricultural land holdings. This Act generally does not grant the same rights to women in inheritance as their male counterparts. In its attempt to plug the problem of defragmentation of land holdings into smaller and smaller parts, authorities have resorted to this remedy. So, in most agrarian states, women don't inherit agricultural land holdings. In villages, farmers have all their wealth in the form of land. If the devolution of land takes place only in favour of the sons, it leaves the daughters with practically nothing.

To better empower the women of the country, the government will have to plug such holes in the system.

8.3.3 Education and Gender Rights

Many of the educational global statements about global goals have conflated "schooling" and "education" by treating them as synonymous or equating them by definition, so that someone who attended school was by definition,

educated. Nonetheless, this statement is false, as in many countries around the world, even though many factors have contributed to the increase in women´s participation in education, statistics proved that this education won't translate into greater participation in their social, economic and political environment, as many of the students get out of school without knowing how to read.

It is true that the situation has improved in the recent years; whereas enrolments have been increasing since 1970 for both sexes, girls' enrolment has been rising faster at both primary and secondary levels. Moreover, today women that enroll in higher levels of the educational system are less likely than men to drop out of school, and they exceed men in grades. Nevertheless, despite the progress achieved in recent years, girls continue to suffer severe disadvantage and exclusion in education systems throughout their lives. An estimated 31 million girls of primary school age and 32 million girls of lower secondary school age were out of school in 2013. Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest proportion of countries with gender parity: only two out of 35 countries. South and West Asia has the widest gender gap in its out-of-school population – 80 percent of its out-of-school girls are unlikely to ever start school compared to 16 percent of its out-of-school boys. Furthermore, a better education often does not translate into better employment opportunities. Even though women outperform men in education, they still face significant discrimination in the labor market and end up in jobs where they don't use any of their skills.

The lack of gender parity and gender equality is an issue all around the world, as almost all countries face gender disparities of some kind, although the challenges vary widely between different regions, and even at different levels within a country. Consequently, we can affirm that gender disparities and inequalities are prevalent within schooling process in both rich and poor countries. For this reason, women empowerment should be a worldwide priority. Girls' and women' education is both an intrinsic right and a latter to help them reach other development objectives. Providing girls and women with a quality education helps break the cycle of poverty: educated women are less likely to get married early and against their will; less likely to die in childbirth; more likely to have healthy babies; and are more likely to send their children to school. Therefore, even though education may not be the only input into women´s empowerment, it is a central one.

8.4 PERSONAL LAWS FOR WOMEN

Rightly did Swami Vivekanand say, 'Just as a bird cannot fly with one wing only, a Nation cannot march forward if the women are left behind'. Men and women are the two holes of a perfect whole. Strength is borne of their union their separation results in weakness. Each has what the other does not have. Each completes the other, and is completed by other. Etymologically, the word 'woman' means - half of man. The relation of the male and female is very well illustrated in our Nyaya Darshan by the analogy of mind and matter, which means that man and woman are closely associated with each other, as the soul and body. Therefore, the women ought to be respected.

According to Dr. Charlotte Watts Violence is a highly stigmatized issue as society often blames women for the violence that they experience. She

conducted a WHO study in various countries like Ethiopia, Japan, Brazil, etc. designed to estimate the prevalence of violence. It was found out that the violent acts on woman by their intimate partners was continuous and at times didn't end even when the woman was pregnant. In India, these features have been observed.

It was also revealed that the majority of women considered abuse at the hands of their partners to be a 'normal' occurrence. This feature is most prevalent in Indian context. The feeling of 'false consciousness' is the culprit behind such ideas. Women under the false belief, identify with the opinion that once married to their husbands, they have to appease him in every way possible. They perceive it as their duty to go through the atrocities committed by partners, since he attains the place of God rather 'Pati Parmeshwar'. They fear the strictness of the orthodox sentiments and are unaware of the prospect that the violence endured, could even be considered a crime or that they have a right to rebel. They accept the situation as their sealed fate. It is accepted as a norm by the abused woman. Also in developing countries like India, there has been found a general inadequacy of effective laws against the realm of domestic violence. The law fails to give enough attention to such areas which have long been ignored and domestic violence is one such area.

8.4.1 Family Violence

Women, going through domestic violence have reported sleeping problems, depression, anxiety attacks, low self-esteem, lack of trust in others, feeling o abandonment, anger, sensitivity to rejection, diminished physical and mental health, inability to work and even poor relations with their relatives and loved ones. Such victimized women are more likely to report miscarriages and abortions, suicidal thoughts and attempts. The physical and mental health effects may last long after the violence has ended.

The children who grow up in such environment are rather confused, agitated from inside. Later in life, they have a strong inclination to turn aggressive. Moreover, the sons loose respect for womenfolk if they are used to seeing them in subversive position. The negative ideas are carried forth in the next generation.

In to a survey done by UNICEF in India, 6902 men were surveyed in the state of Uttar Pradesh during 1996. It was seen that 45% of the married men acknowledged beating up their wives.According to Women's Feature Service, every 6 hours in India, a young married woman is burnt alive, beaten to death, or forced to commit suicide.

Proportion of women suffering domestic violence in India varies between 20-45%. Country reports 2004 cited data from the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, which claimed 130 reported cases of dowry deaths, 490 instances of rape and 1211 cases of cruelty by the husband or in-laws in Delhi alone.

According to the Hindu, a study cited 'unequal citizens: a study of Muslim women in India' and published by Oxford Press, greater proportion of women suffered from violence than Muslim women. Research conducted in Kerala; found that approx. 49% of women who didn't own property were victims of violence at home against 7% of those who did. However, this result could be due to underreporting among the more privileged women.

According to the Tribune of Chandigarh, domestic violence is increasing in Punjab since link between alcoholism and violence could be seen and Punjab had the highest per capita consumption of alcohol.

In 1983, domestic violence was recognized as a specific criminal offence by the introduction of section 498-A into the Indian Penal Code. It highlights the criminal dimension of mental and physical cruelty inflicted by the husband or his relatives for reasons that may extend beyond 'unlawful demands'. It is believed to have a strong deterrent value because of its immediate repercussions. It classifies such violence as cognizable offence, so the accused can be arrested without a warrant. It also gives a woman a lawyer to negotiate a solution to her plight.

Four types of cruelty are dealt with by this law:-

a) Conduct that is likely to drive a woman to suicide.
b) Conduct which is likely to cause grave injury to the life, limb and health of the woman.
c) Harassment with the purpose of forcing the woman or her relatives to give some property.
d) Harassment if the women's relatives couldn't yield to demands for more money or property.

The punishment is imprisonment for up to three years and a fine. The complaint could be lodged by the person itself or by any relative on her behalf. This is an important merit since the victimized women are often not in a position seek help.

The forms of 'cruelty' recognized by the Indian courts are persistent denial of food, insisting on perverse sexual conduct, constantly locking a woman out of the house, denying the woman access to children- thereby causing mental torture, physical violence, taunting-demoralizing and putting down the woman with intention of causing mental torture, confining the woman at home and not allowing her normal social intercourse, abusing children in their mother's presence and denying the paternity of children with the intention of causing mental torture and threatening divorce until dowry is given.

The matrimonial home is the household a woman shares with her husband, whether it is rented, officially provided or owned by the husband or his relatives. She has the right to remain in that home as long as she is married. If the victim is being pressurized to leave the home, she can ask the court for an 'injunction' or 'restraining order' protecting her from being thrown out. An injunction is a court order directing a person to do or not to do something.

The IPC addresses dowry death in section 304B. If a woman dies of 'unnatural death' within 7years of marriage and has been harassed for dowry before her death, the courts assume that the death is due to it. A dowry death is punishable by imprisonment of at least 7 years.

Under section 306, it deals with the crime of abetting a woman to suicide.

If a woman is judicially separated, her husband cannot have sexual intercourse with her without her consent. Section 376-A of IPC deals with it.

Indian President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam gave assent to domestic violence bill, 2005 which aims at protecting women from verbal, economic, emotional and sexual abuses.

As per the Act, a police officer, protection officer, service provider or magistrate who receives a message of domestic violence shall inform the aggrieved person of her right to make an application for obtaining relief by way of protection order. The Act provides the rights for free legal services under the Legal Services Authorities Act,1987 and right to file a complaint under Sec. 498-A of the IPC, wherever relevant. The aggrieved person may be provided shelter in the home and also medical facilities, if needed. Any woman subjected to mental/physical injuries, physical abuse, criminal intimidation by force, sexual abuse (any conduct of a sexual nature that abuses, humiliates, degrades, or otherwise violates the dignity of woman), will be covered under domestic violence. The state governments may appoint, by notification, such number of protection officers, as far as possible women, in each district as may be considered necessary and shall notify the area within which a protection officer may exercise the powers and perform duties conferred on him or under this Act.

8.4.2 Marriage:

Marriage was initially seen as a social institution to curtail unlimited polygamy in men and ascertain paternity of children. The State has over the years made laws to regulate all aspects of human lives and marriage is no exception. In India marriages are regulated in accordance with the personal laws of the religion professed by the parties to the marriage. For inter-religious and inter-nation marriages we have the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969 respectively. Thus, we have laws that regulate the essential conditions for a valid marriage, the grounds of dissolution, maintenance of spouse and children, adoption, guardianship, inheritance, succession etc. In addition, we also have some secular laws dealing with matrimonial affairs in the form of Section 125 in the CrPC, Sections 498A of the IPC, Family Courts Act, 1984 and the Domestic Violence Act, 2005.

For Hindus and Christians marriage is a sacrament and there is great emphasis of the performance of customary rules, rites and ceremonies of the parties concerned which may be the saptpadi, saatpheras, exchange of garlands or vows. These ceremonies are necessary for a valid marriage. After the introduction of consent as a necessary requirement for marriage, Hindu marriages are said to have assumed a contractual character. However, the claim stands refuted as lack of consent makes Hindu marriages merely voidable and not void -ab-initio like contracts. Muslim marriages are contractual with emphasis on offer and acceptance in the presence of competent witnesses.

Hindu scriptures regard the wife as ardhangini meaning the other half, implying that a man is incomplete till he marries. Also, wife has been called the grahlakshmi, dharampatni and sahadharmini who is a necessary partner of her husband in discharging his religious duties and spiritual obligations. Hindus had customs that barred widow remarriages and encouraged Sati pratha. Social reformers were instrumental in doing away with such regressive practices.

Among Hindus, marriage is considered to be an eternal union for many lives to come. Thus, concept of divorce was not recognized before the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 came into force. Some references can be found in ancient Hindu texts where Sage Vashistha, Parasara and Kautilya mention certain

circumstances when a woman may abandon her husband and remarry. This was permitted in cases where husband is devoid of character or impotent or has become ascetic. However, these texts were never highlighted in a patriarchal society and women were compelled to stay with polygamous husbands as men would often take more wives than one with impunity.

Before 1955 marriages among Hindus were monogamous for the woman alone. Now, with the sole exception of Islam (which permits a man to have four legally wedded wives at any given point of time) all spouses have a right to have a monogamous relationship. With the striking down of Section 497 IPC adultery is no longer a criminal offence but is a ground of divorce available to both the husband as well as the wife. Bigamy, in addition to being a ground a divorce is also a cause for criminal prosecution of the errant spouse under Section 494 of the IPC.

Marriage confers right to conjugal relationship and denial of the same amounts to cruelty, especially when the parties are young and in good health. Section 9 of the Hindu Marriage Act and Section 22 of the Special Marriage Act of 1954 provide a matrimonial remedy in the form of Restitution of Conjugal Rights to one deserted by his/her spouse. However, this provision which apparently is gender neutral is currently under the judicial scanner for being violative of human privacy, dignity and autonomy.

Women have a right to live in the matrimonial home, where the husband resides. She also has a right to be maintained from the husband's income. In cases where wife is earning equally well or is well qualified to earn, the court may deny her maintenance from her husband's income. For men seeking maintenance from their wives, Courts apply the test of 'able bodied person' to determine whether he is capable of earning his livelihood or not.

Marriage gives the parties a right to acquire properties in joint names, own joint bank accounts, lockers; nominate each other as nominee in insurance, pension, gratuity papers. Spouses are legally entitled to receive pension in case of death or disability of the other spouse. However, marriage does not give the spouses a share in each other's self-acquired property. Except Goa, the concept of matrimonial property is not recognized in India, thus upon dissolution of marriage by divorce the parties can stake no claim to the other's property by inheritance or otherwise. As per rules of intestate succession, upon husband's death, wife gets equal share in all of her husband's property along with her children, but husband can get share only in his wife's own property and not her ancestral property after her death.

According to the guidelines issued by the Central Adoption Resource Authority, married couples may adopt however both spouses must consent to the adoption. Also, no child shall be given in adoption to a couple unless they have at least two years of stable marital relationship. Some religions consider husband to be the natural guardian of his minor wife, however there is a secular Law in place prohibiting child marriages in India- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. Now, if an adult male who is above 18 years of age contracts child marriage, he shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for 2 years or with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees or both. Also, consummation of marriage with a minor bride is no longer protected under the

IPC and the Supreme Court by a 2017 ruling, has termed it as marital rape punishable under the law.

Communications between spouses during the subsistence of marriage are privileged from disclosure. Spousal privilege is protected under section 122 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 because it is essential to sustain full confidentiality between a husband and a wife who share the most intimate relationship. This protects all communications made during the subsistence off marriage and the same privilege continues even after the breakup of the marriage, but only for communications that were made during the existence of marriage.

8.4.3 Divorce

Both the genders of the society whether man and women have their own rights. It is very important that the right of anyone do not disturbed by other. Divorce or dissolution of marriage is a traumatized action which happened to any couple.

It can be because of any reason i.e. due to lack of understanding or commitment in couple, due to family problems or financial problems or if one partner is engaged in phase of cruelty or adultery.

There are several reasons for this state but in every case it not only affect the person physically and socially but it also breaks down him/her socially and mentally.Being women are always confined as the weaker section in the society where the safety security and their stability are much harder than men.

In the case of divorce women the problem increases and reaches to double. To handle all the problems as well as economic and social problem it becomes very important for them to be strong enough.To ensure that every divorce women have their full rights even after the dissolution of marriage, one can always refer to best divorce lawyer in Gurgaon, India.

Here is the list of rights of women even after the divorce.

1. Women have her right over the streedhan:

Streedhan is nothing but all the gifts which can in the form of wealth, cash, property, jewelleryetc of the wife gets at the time of marriage. Streedhan is different from dowry. Dowry is basically asked forced fully by the family but streedhan is something which is given to daughter after her marriage voluntarily.

In the case of streedhan it do not matter that that have the possession of over streedhan. According to the law of the Indian constitution every wife has solely ownership right over the streedhan. So in every condition it belongs only to the wife.

2. Right to residence for her:

The house in which husband and wife got married or the matrimonial home is as much of wife as it is of husband. So the wife have her fully right to live there even if the house is joint family, solely under husbands possession, his ancestral house or even rental house.

3. Right to share monogamous relationship with husband:

Until and unless the divorce or dissolution of marriage formalities are not formally completed, till then wife have a complete right to share

monogamous relationship that means her husband cannot make physical relationship with another partner as well as cannot marry to another women.If a man do something than wife can easily file a case against him for adultery which is a criminal offence in the eyes of court.

Even wife can sue her husband on the grounds of having sexual relationship outside marriage commonly called extra marital affair.

4.Right to get alimony:

Under the section 18 of Hindu Adoption and Maintain Act, 1956 for women. A Hindu wife can ask the court for the payment of her monthly expenses that her husband is going to pay. In such case husband is liable to pay maintenance money, alimony as well as amount for the maintenance of children.The amount of alimony and maintenance is paid in the form of monthly basis or lump sum amount. If in any case the husband shows unable to pay the amount of alimony them it will be recovered by selling the property and assets of the husband.

5. Right to have self-respect and dignity:

Every woman even married or going to take divorce have right to live with fully with self-respect and dignity. It can be harmed in any case. It is the liability of the husband to provide the respect, satisfactory level of living of standard to his wife as he and his family is living. It is also the right of wife to live freely with any physical and mental bond.

6. Right to ask for maintenance for her child:

Mother can be a best mate for a child but she needs money to fulfill her child's basic needs. It the right of every wife to ask for the maintenance amount from her husband for the maintenance and completing the basic necessities of her child without any issue.

7. Right to file case against domestic violence:

If there is any condition the wife is facing of domestic violence then it is the right of wife that she can file a case against his husband or even to this relatives and in-laws. The case can be files under any of the circumstances that is physically torture, mentally torture, breaking down economically or socially, violating her rights and even torturing in the name of any other conditions.

8. Right to ask for the payment of attorney:

A wife even after divorce can ask for the amount of paying the legal bills as the husband may have better financial conditions than the husband. That is might why wife cannot afford a good lawyer. If husband is earning more than wife than all the legal bills will be paid by him accordingly or as per the order of court

8.5 LET US SUM UP

Strong crusade against domestic violence could be launched only when we try to implement the already-existing measures. Making more laws is not the only solution. Its only when we are sincere in our efforts at the grassroots level also, we can expect a change to happen. It is through a collective

determination to support women's rights not only 'outside' but also 'inside' the hitherto restricted boundary of home, that we can attain the objective of destroying the well-embedded thorns of domestic violence from our society.

According to Mackinnon, society treats women either differently or equally to men to suit the convenience of 'man'. In India, women don't generally report cases of domestic violence. This hesitance on the part of the women is partly due to the burden of expectation which the society has from her and not from the husband. The wife is blamed for the failure of a marriage. The woman who offers resistance and is not thus unable to sustain her marriage is looked down upon, as someone who failed to perform her duties as an 'ideal wife'. Divorcees are either shunned or looked upon by 'hungry/ penetrating' eyes. Another example of where women are treated differently to men because of their sexual difference is in education. Some of the Indians have this notion that women are not entitled to sound education and job and their only duty is to look after the household. Even educated women are married off before they could secure a job. So when such women try to rebel against the domestic injustice meted out to them, the question of financial security after separation faces them. In such cases, even the women's own parents refuse to help. The parents are imbued with the idea that they partake off their duties towards their daughters after marrying them.

Moreover, men also sometimes choose to advocate 'sameness' formal equality to suit their interests as opined by Mackinnon. The few laws through which Indian women can legally fight are being criticized by men's organization which claims that law is being misused by the women to harass their husbands. Men are wrongfully imprisoned because the law allows a man to be arrested solely on the testimony of a woman.

8.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Mention about the property rights granted to women in India.

2. What are the legal benefits given to women while at work

8.7ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Section 14 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, declares, "Any property possessed by a female Hindu, whether acquired before or after the commencement of this Act, shall be held by her as full owner thereof and not as a limited owner." This makes women absolute owners of their properties. However, not many women are aware of their rights; there is a misconception that women enjoy only limited rights over property, besides numerous other restrictions.

The Act was amended in 2005 to give equal rights to women. The amended Act, which came into effect on September 9, 2005, is applicable to the various sects and castes of Hindus, apart from Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains.

Prior to the amendment, a woman had no right to a joint ownership or coparcenary property. Section 6 of the amended Act talks about the devolution of interest in coparcenary properties. Now, a daughter becomes an owner of the coparcenary property by birthright in the same manner as a son does. Widows are also entitled to claim a share equal to that of their children at the time of distribution of the joint family property among the sons.

Section 27 of the said Act provides that no woman shall be employed in any part of a factory for pressing cotton in which a cotton opener is at work. Section 48 thereof lays down that in every factory wherein more than 30 women workers are employed, there shall be provided and maintained a suitable room for the use of the children (under the age of 6 years) of such women.

Sections 4 and 5 of the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provide for equal remuneration for equal work to male and female workers for performing works of similar nature and prohibits discrimination in matters of recruitment of men and women which discrimination if carried out is punishable with imprisonment which shall not be less than three months but which can extend upto one year and fine.

It may next be noted that as per Section 4 of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 no woman shall work in any establishment during six weeks immediately following the day of her delivery or mis-carriage. Furthermore, during the period of her pregnancy, a woman shall not be required to do any job of arduous nature or which involves long hours of standing, or any task, which is likely to interfere with her pregnancy.

Section 5 of the said Act further lays down that a pregnant mother is entitled to 12 weeks leave with full pay i.e. six weeks before and six weeks after the date of birth of child. Furthermore, if she works at least 80 days during the period of one year, she is entitled to full pay leave even in the event of miscarriage.

8.8SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Law relating to women and children by Dr. S.C. Tripathi & vibha arora edition 6th 2015 central law publication
2. Agnes, Flavia Law and Gender Inequality: The Politics of Women's Rights in India, OUP, New Delhi, 127-128 (1999); www.anna.iwate-pu.ac.jp
3. Agarwal Bina, Are We Not Peasants Too? Land Rights and Women's Claims in India, Population Council, 4 (2002)
4. Bahl, M. (2007) Violence on women by men, pp. 72-184, New Delhi: Cyber tech publications
5. BeeviJ.M.F.(1998) , Law as an instrument of change in women's status pp. 20-42 in Women human rights religion and violence, Delhi: Nirmal Book Agency
6. Kohli M. (1998) Women rights to equality and social tradition in India pp.93-101 in Women human rights religion and violence, Delhi: Nirmal Book Agency

UNIT IX –PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS OF WOMEN

Structure

9.1 INTRODUCTION

There are two main pillars of human life-man and woman. Both share equal responsibility in the making of society and hence both are supplement to each other. From the very beginning, the women in various societies of the world are exploited in many ways. Since women had a strong will to improve their status in society, they have managed to make a niche for themselves in today’s society. Also, there are some elements in the society who have helped women to be independent, fight for their rights and injustice against them. Women have succeeded in improving their status and are improving day by day.

In earlier times, women were exploited through every possible means by the society. They suffered a lot of criticism, lacked freedom and stood nowhere next to men. They were even deprived of the basic birthrights of a human being. It took a lot of effort and courage for them to mark an impression of “women power” and make a significant place in society. Poetesses such as Charlotte Bronte inspired women by quoting, “I am no bird and no net ensnares me, I am a free human being with an independent will.” Through this she tried to convey that women are no longer to be treated as birds in the cage, instead they should be given equal liberty and opportunities as men. Such supportive sections of society led to the developments that are responsible for the improved status of women in today’s society. Factors led to the enhancement of status of women in modern society can be seen in the improvement in the status of women in the society which can be analyzed in the light of the major changes that have taken place in areas such as legislations, education, economic and employment sector, political participation and awareness of their rights on the part of women, etc.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Analyse the factors that effect the status of women in India
- Identify the possible features that contribute to the growth of women in various fields

9.3 POLITICAL FACTOR

Women's participation in decision-making is essential for women's interests to be incorporated into governance. It has been widely experienced that governance structures which do not provide for adequate participation of women, often suffer from state interventions which are neither inclusive nor democratic. Including women, especially in local governments is an essential step towards creating gender equal opportunities and gender sensitive policies. Since women have different needs and perspectives on social and political issues, it is important to involve women in governments to incorporate all of the societal viewpoints in policy and decision-making processes. Women are actively involved in household and community work and hence well aware of real issues faced by common people. This gives them insight and perspective which can be instrumental in sustainable overall development. (Saxena), only 21% of national parliament are women. Lack of financial resources can limit participation given the costs associated with elections. Independent funding and placing limits or campaigns spending may support women in overcoming the barriers to politics.(Bessell)

The Constitution of India guaranteed justice-social, economic and political, liberty of thought, and equality to all citizens. Constitution provided for equality of women and called State to take measures to neutralize the socio-economic, educational and political disadvantage faced by women.

Challenges faced by women in politics The challenge is to estimate the actual participation of women in the decision making process.

a) **Participation as a Proxy Candidate:** There have been evidences that due to reservation policy, certain women got elected into the setup, but they acted merely as the mouthpiece of their male family members. This indicates that there is a possibility of on-roll women participation to be higher than what it actually exists on ground. Awareness programs and increase in female education is now taking care of such happenings and women active participation is on an increase. Still there is a need to record data at a more micro level so that women who only act as a proxy can be identified. (MDSahabuddin Mondal, 2015)
b) **Measurement of Decision-Making Initiatives:** The quantitative data of political participation of women at local level is available but the qualitative data on the aspects of their active participation including the utilization of theDecision-making functionality provided to them is not being quantified properly. Although, the legislature has enabled their huge presence into the state of affairs, but their valuable essence into the system is yet to be established at most of the places. The data on their sensitization about their rights and its usage is still missing. Efforts can be made to capture the performance of women in debates, initiative in brining legislation and

participation in other aspects of the democratic process. (MD Sahabuddin Mondal, 2015) (Ambedkar)

c) **Socio-cultural factor:** There is a conventional belief that, girls are created to require care of youngsters and do room works than taking part outside home activity. Hence, there's division of works between men and ladies, which suggests home activities ar belongs to girls and outdoors home activities are belongs to men. girls are weighed down with completely different home activities like preparation, take caring children, laundry and then on. These all activities create girls busy within the home and impede their involvement within the politics of the country. Culturally, there's a belief that girls are imagined to be diode however to not lead. after all stereotypical notions concerning girls represent major barriers; social perception concerning leadership ability of ladies, women's lack of self-assertiveness is a few barriers that hinder the participation of ladies. during this regard ancient attitudes towards gender equality in influence women's advancement in political participation. most significantly within the country girls are thoughtabout subordinate to men and second category members/ voters each within the family and within the society particularly in most components of rural areas11 (ShimelisKassa, 2015)

d) **Religious factor:** Religion is another important source of cultural beliefs in most countries. Arguments about women's inferiority to men are present across all dominant religions, and religion has longbeen used to exclude women from aspects of social, political, or religious life around the world. In India the major religion is Hinduism, the other minority religions are Islam and Christianity. Hindu people mostly not allow women to lead as a head. They consider women are subjected to men. In a country like India this is very common among people but now a days the time has changed, women began to lead political parties, Several states currently have women Chief Ministers and ministers, chairperson for more years etc.12 (ShimelisKassa, 2015)

e) **Economic factor:** The Lack of economic resources is one among the most important obstacles that forestall girls from collaborating in politics in bigger numbers, making it easier for ladies to access economic resources, therefore, this may be a key in increasing women's presence within the political realm. Of course,women's participation in political life depends mostly on the part of their access to employment which supplies them not solely material independence, however additionally bound skilled skills and kitchen utensil confidence so, access to resources suggests that production and finances contains a direct relationship and influence on the participation of girls in political establishments. Thanks to these facts, girls continually have to get permission of the father to shop for

some consumption materials, although girls are salaried, most of the time their financial gain is controlled by men and typically if father and mother have their own financial gain. Whereas men get pleasure from outside home like hotels and bars. Thus girls are continually dependent on men economically this is the main cause for her low participation to politics of the country

9.4 LEGAL FACTORS

Legally a female is known as a woman after she has passed through her childhood and adolescence, i.e. basically after crossing the teenage a girl is a woman. Government of India has made several laws to provide equal status to women in our country and secure their lives from various violence and crimes. Constitution of India provides fundamental rights and fundamental duties to the citizens of India; each and every citizen of this country is equally entitled of these rights and duties. The Constitution of India guarantees to all Indian women equality (Article 14), no discrimination by the State (Article 15(1)), equality of opportunity (Article 16), and equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d)). In addition, it allows special provisions to be made by the State in favour of women and children (Article 15(3)), renounces practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e)), and also allows for provisions to be made by the State for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief. (Article 42).

9.4.1 Legal Status of a Woman in India

Women in India are being provided with the legal security to secure their economic, social and cultural lives. These are few acts which show the efforts made by Indian Government in interest of women's life safeguard. Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Maternity Benefit Act 1861, Births, Deaths & Marriages Registration Act 1886, Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971, National Commission for Women Act 1990, Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act 1999, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005, Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act 2013, Hindu Widows Remarriage Act 1856, Muslim women (protection of rights on divorce) Act 1986, Guardians and Wards Act 1890, Indian Penal Code 1860, Christian Marriages Act 1872, etc.

9.4.2 Women in Family

Family is a cooperative unit based on the common interest and mutual support. A woman is the key role of a family. The support of husband, children and in-laws is must to make a happy family. Earlier woman was just treated as a house keeper. She needs to serve her children, in-laws and her husband. But the scenario has changed now, woman enjoys the equal status in the family and contributes more than her husband as she earns for the family and performs all theirresponsibilities of the household. Women have now stepped out of the house to live their lives in their own manner. Contribution of woman is more than a man in the present era. The acts for the working women and housewives are, Guardians and Wards Act 1890, Married Woman's Property Act 1872, Indian Succession Act, 1925, Dowry Prohibition

Act 1961, Hindu Marriage Act 1955, Muslim Women (protection of rights of divorce) Act 1986.

9.4.3 Women and Education

The education of women in India plays a significant role in improving livings standards in the country. A higher women literacy rate improves the quality of life both at home and outside the home, by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially female children, and in reducing the infant mortality rate. Several studies have shown that a lower level of women literacy rates results in higher levels of fertility and infant mortality, poorer nutrition, lower earning potential and the lack of an ability to make decisions within a household. Women's lower educational level is also shown to adversely affect the health and living conditions of children.

A survey that was conducted in India showed results which support the fact that infant mortality rate was inversely related to female literacy rate and educational level. The survey also suggests a correlation between education and economic growth. In India, it was found that there is a large disparity between female literacy rates in different states. For example, while Kerala actually has a female literacy rate of about 86 percent, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have female literacy rates around 55-60 percent. These values are further correlated with health levels of the Indians, where it was found that Kerala was the state with the lowest infant mortality rate while Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are the states with the lowest life expectancies in India. Furthermore, the disparity of female literacy rates across rural and urban areas is also significant in India.

Out of the 24 states in India, 6 of them have female literacy rates of below 60 percent. The rural state Rajasthan has a female literacy rate of less than 12 percent. In India, higher education is defined as the education of an age group between 18 and 24, and is largely funded by the government. Despite women making up 24-50% of higher education enrollment, there is still a gender imbalance within higher education. Only one third of science students and 7% of engineering students are women. In comparison however, over half the students studying education are women.

The number of literate women among the female population of India was between 2-6% from the British Raj onwards to the formation of the Republic of India in 1947. Concerted efforts led to improvement from 15.3% in 1961 to 28.5% in 1981. By 2001 literacy for women had exceeded 50% of the overall female population, though these statistics were still very low compared to world standards and even male literacy within India. Recently the Indian government has launched Saakshar Bharat Mission for Female Literacy. This mission aims to bring down female illiteracy by half of its present level.

9.4.4 Women ‘s Economic, Social and Cultural rights

The movement to assure women’s economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) as a basic human’s right is just emerging in India. The movement aims to locate women’s right within the larger human rights framework, and by doingso moves away from women’s issue only within the framework of violence and reproductive rights. ESCR attempts to look at the broader issues

facing women namely poverty, housing, unemployment, education, water, food security, trade, etc.

While the human rights movement at ESCR is largely contained at the international policy level, there are emerging social movements around the world. In the Indian context, projects like the, Programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PWESCR) aims to build the women rights movement in India to create equality in all the sphere of women's lives. Women's economic opportunity in India is a rapidly changing landscape as women are not less than any man in every sector whether it may be organized or unorganized. The exposure is needed for the women in unorganized sector.

9.4.5 Women Reservation

In India women were considered to be kept inside the house for the service of their in-laws, children and husband. Their rights were not secure and they were not given equal opportunity in any of the aspect whether it may be social, economic, political or cultural. Reservation for women started to give exposure to them and to make Indian society feel that women are not less than man in any aspect. In 1993 the constitutional amendment called for random one third village council leader or pradhan position in gram panchayat to be reserved for women. Recent researches on quota system has revealed that it has changed perception on women's abilities, improved women electoral chances, and raised aspirations and educational attainment for adolescent girls. There is a long-term plan to extend this reservation to parliament as well as legislative assemblies. For instance, some law schools in India have 30% reservation for females. Progressive political opinion in India is strongly in favour of providing preferential treatment to women to create a level playing field for all the citizens. The Women's Reservation Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 9 March 2010 by a majority vote of 186 members in favour and 1 against.

As of March 2013, the Lok Sabha has not voted on the bill. Critics say gender cannot be held as a basis for reservation alone other factors should also be considered e.g. economic, social conditions of woman candidate especially when applying reservation for educated women. There also is a growing demand for women reservation in pre-existing reservations like OBC, SC/ST, Physically handicapped etc. Some feminist groups still demand that reservation for women should be at least 50% as they comprise 50% of the population.

9.5 PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Gender is a critical determinant of mental health and mental illness. The patterns of psychological distress and psychiatric disorder among women are different from those seen among men. Women have a higher mean level of internalizing disorders while men show a higher mean level of externalizing disorders. Gender differences occur particularly in the rates of common mental disorders wherein women predominate. Differences between genders have been reported in the age of onset of symptoms, clinical features, frequency of psychotic symptoms, course, social adjustment, and long-term outcome of severe mental disorders.

Women who abuse alcohol or drugs are more likely to attribute their drinking to a traumatic event or a stressor and are more likely to have been

sexually or physically abused than other women. Girls from nuclear families and women married at a very young age are at a higher risk for attempted suicide and self-harm. Social factors and gender specific factors determine the prevalence and course of mental disorders in female sufferers. Low attendance in hospital settings is partly explained by the lack of availability of resources for women. Around two-thirds of married women in India were victims of domestic violence. Concerted efforts at social, political, economic, and legal levels can bring change in the lives of Indian women and contribute to the improvement of the mental health of these women.

The ideal Indian housewife is the perfect example of Indian womanhood. She is someone who works toward the satisfaction of multiple individual souls as well as of the family as a unit. She works tirelessly and basks in the glory of the success of those she works for. She identifies herself with her family and, even though reciprocation may not occur, is not deterred in her spirit to serve them. The Indian housewife is not supposed to fall ill and has to bear everything gamely; often stress leads her to present to the psychiatrist as a patient of somatization or conversion disorder with the unconscious need that her helpless plea for help is heard by her family members. The biggest battle a woman wages is often on the domestic front day after day, and this goes unnoticed. To this Indian woman plodding along with her domestic chores and at the same time engaging in lucrative occupation and entrepreneurship, we must direct our attention.

The status of the Indian woman, though changing, is still lowly, and she continues to be the underdog in many sections, despite some evidence of her so-called emancipation. In many sections of Indian society, the birth of a girl is not a reason of delight but rather the family bemoans its lot. To be the first-born and a girl is to displease all members of a family who would have preferred a boy; but to be born the second, third or fourth only serves to increase their wrath. Girls born in a family are often criticised by all family members and even called a curse. We see many cases where a girl born into a family is rejected outright by the mother who does not care as much for her nutrition and health as she does for the boy child. She undergoes humiliation and suffering at the hands of her parents in a patriarchal society. She may try her utmost to win the love and affection of her parents but, in spite of her accomplishments, wins very little. She hopes and prays that the situation improves, but continues to feel forlorn and remains in a constant state of ‘affect’ hunger. She may channelise her energies into arts, sports or studies and win laurels for the same but is finally unwillingly married off into a family that has little affection or concern for her or her laurels. She is further harassed by a mother-in-law who has no occupation but to run down the daughter-in-law, and has a husband sandwiched between mother and wife, and who, therefore, does not give her a patient hearing. Finally, in utter despair, she lands up with conversion, somatisation, depression or a suicide attempt as a means to convey her feelings and get attention of her family membersas well as a means to end her entreaties. This story has been lived and re-lived in a number of Indian homes, and it is the story of many dowry deaths, depressions, suicides and psychosomatic disorders.

Why do Indian women succumb to this, or, rather, should they not rebel? The answer lies in the psychology of the female and particularly of the Indian female.

9.6 SOCIAL FACTORS

It is really the societal context within which we live that shapes our definitions of health and illness, shapes the way we try to maintain health or deal with illness, defines our access to health services, determines the cost of those services, and influences the character of the service we receive.

They are mainly:

a. cultural and social values and attitudes
b. the relationship of economic status to health
c. labor force participation, occupation, and health status
d. family, household structure, social supports, and health
e. interactions with the health care system

Some social factors that influence the health behavior of women and men have a differential effect, and some of the factors seem to be part of the bedrock of our socialization and sex role behaviors. For example, women's greater willingness to report symptoms and seek health services leads to early identification and treatment of illnesses and thus protects our health. We women take fewer risks than men, and that tends to protect us from many accidents and injuries, but the other consequence is that we do not enter into as many competitive activities that lead to fitness and mastery of the environment.

In addition, some postulate that society's expectation of more passive and dependent behavior on the part of women is associated with the fact that depression is so much more prevalent among women than among men. Other social factors influencing our health behavior shift with changes in our society, and we do not always know what direction those influences will take. In recent years we have seen some major changes that influence women's health. Among those changes, we believe that the most important are (a) the increasing rates of poverty among women, (b) the entrance of large numbers of women into the labor force, and (c) the increasing proportion of older women. All of these changes have implications for women's health status, their health behaviors, and their access to health services. We know that economic disadvantage is associated with health disadvantage, and we know that women are economically disadvantaged relative to men regardless of age, race, ethnicity, education, or employment status.

Moreover, we know that the economic gap between women and men is widening, and that more and more women live in poverty. Poor people are likely to face frequent illnesses because of poor nutrition, poor living conditions, high levels of stress, and reduced access to health.

Women as individuals-aswell as organizations that are interested in women'swell-being- should do the following:

***** Stay informed about issues that affect women’s health.

* Promote public education on health matters.

* Participate in the personal and political processesthat empower women and promote their health.

9.7 LET US SUM UP

It is largely held that women all over the world have been made to suffer discrimination and deprivation of various kinds since the beginning of time that they have all along been denied even such basic rights as access to literacy and property. This global concern has steadily grown through the past few decades and has resulted in efforts to bring women into the mainstream of life, mainly through socio-economic activities aimed at empowering them and thus restoring equality between the sexes.

Real empowerment of women, however, lies in helping them unfold the spiritual aspect of their personality, build up their character and manifest their purity and motherhood. It is these that make up the character of the ideal Indian woman; earning capacity and public status are secondary. All women are parts of the same infinite divine Power, and hence divine. Fully realizing the importance and urgency of the uplift of women, if we are to save our cultural traditions and spiritual values and counter the negative trends that are now affecting our body politic. SHGs too organize cultural and value-orientation programs and other meetings on their own for their all-round development. Recently, one such conference was attended by 1700 members. Empowerment is complete only when a given community takes full control of its own development and the implementing agency, much like a catalytic agent, remains in the background after initiating the process of change. This is exactly what the Ashrama does: once the machinery it has set up is in working order, it hands over the management of affairs to the grass-root organization or SHG, and itself remains in the background to provide motivation and guidance from time to time.

As Swami Vivekananda said, “Our duty is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will come through God's laws. Let us put ideas into their heads, and they will do the rest”

9.8 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. What are the social factors that effect women?

2. How has the psychological factors influenced the position of women?

9.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

It is really the societal context within which we live that shapes our definitions of health and illness, shapes the way we try to maintain health or deal with illness, defines our access to health services, determines the cost of those services, and influences the character of the service we receive. They are mainly:cultural and social values and attitudes, the relationship of economic status to health, labor force participation, occupation, and health status, family, household structure, social supports, and health, interactions with the health care system

Some social factors that influence the health behavior of women and men have a differential effect, and some of the factors seem to be part of the bedrock of our socialization and sex role behaviors. For example, women's greater willingness to report symptoms and seek health services leads to early identification and treatment of illnesses and thus protects our health

. The patterns of psychological distress and psychiatric disorder among women are different from those seen among men. Women have a higher mean

level of internalizing disorders while men show a higher mean level of externalizing disorders. Gender differences occur particularly in the rates of common mental disorders wherein women predominate. Differences between genders have been reported in the age of onset of symptoms, clinical features, frequency of psychotic symptoms, course, social adjustment, and long-term outcome of severe mental disorders. Women who abuse alcohol or drugs are more likely to attribute their drinking to a traumatic event or a stressor and are more likely to have been sexually or physically abused than other women. Girls from nuclear families and women married at a very young age are at a higher risk for attempted suicide and self-harm. Social factors and gender specific factors determine the prevalence and course of mental disorders in female sufferers.

9.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1.Olff M, Langeland W, Draijer N, Gersons BP. Gender differences in posttraumatic stress disorder. Psychol Bull. 2007;133:183–204. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

2. Poduval J, Poduval M. Working mothers: How much working, how much mothers, and where is the womanhood? Mens Sana Monogr. 2009;7:63–79. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

3. Rahman Q. The neurodevelopment of human sexual orientation. NeurosciBiobehav Rev. 2005;29:1057–66. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

4. Adler N, Marmot M, McEwen B, et al., editors. Socioeconomic Status and Health in Industrial Nations: Social, Psychological and Biological Pathways. New York, NY: New York Academy of Sciences; 1999. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

UNIT X –INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

Structure

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) designated 1975 as International Women's Year, organizing a world conference in Mexico City on the status of women. The conference established a set of goals for countries to attain over the next ten years in order to advance women's rights around the world. The UN further designated the decade from 1976-1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women. In 1980 the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women gathered in Copenhagen to review the progress of the goals set in 1975, and in 1985 the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women convened in Nairobi. These conferences were attended by government representatives, while representatives of NGOs gathered simultaneously at related conferences.

Despite their vital roles in national and international production, women's economic status in the mid-eighties remains hostage to micro and macro forces which they are powerless to influence. The final United Nations inventory of the Decade, its World Survey of Women's Condition based on information submitted by over 100 governments, documents the stunning absence of women from those formal institutions and processes which internationally, nationally and locally determine, priorities and allocate resources.

10.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the goals and standards set for the development of women by the world organisations.

10.3 DECADE FOR WOMEN – (1975- 1985)

The United Nations has declared 1975 International Women's Year, and the women's movement hopes that more than mere lip service will be paid to upgrading the status of women throughout the world. "We have it in our power to make this Year a truly valuable and important advance in the position of women in the social, economic, cultural and political process," said U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim in December 1974, "or, alternatively, merely to make it a ceremonial occasion devoid of practical meaning."

The United Nations is highlighting the year by sponsoring a world conference on women June 19-July 2, 1975, in Mexico City. It will be the first major inter-governmental meeting ever held that is devoted to the status of women in society. Participating nations will discuss the current roles of women and their involvement in national and international affairs. The delegates will be called on to approve a "World Plan of Action," outlining objectives and goals for improving the position of women over the next 10 years.

Women are still subject to various forms of discrimination, whether overt or subtle, in nearly every country. Though women make up about half of the world's population,they are vastly underrepresented in public life almost everywhere. Some of the most obvious forms of discrimination can be attributed to religious law and custom. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the religious police have the power to spray women's legs with black paint if they appear in public without the traditional dress. Dr.PromillaKapur, a specialist in the sociology of women, has written that in a number of Hindu households in India, the birth of a daughter is cause for sorrow, while the birth of a son is cause for much attention and celebration.

The marriage laws in several countries deprive women of personal rights as well as property rights. In many cases the husband is recognized as the head of the family, and the wife is given little legal voice in family decisions. In Mexico, the Philippines and Uruguay, for example, she must get special permission from her husband to exercise such legal rights as signing a contract or bringing a law suit. In some other countries, she must obtain his authorization to engage in trade or industry.

According to the United Nations, nine countries still do not give women full political rights. Yet even in countries where they have been accorded political rights for many years, women are not as active as men in public affairs and government. According to HelviSipila, U.N. Secretary-General for International Women's Year, "too few women in either the developed or the developing countries participate in formulating and implementing national, regional, or international policies relating to development and population

10.4 GOALS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE INITIATIVE

National Governments should:

1. Promote change in social and economic structures to make for full equality of women andtheir free access to all types of development, without discrimination of any kind and to alltypes of education and employment.

2. Take appropriate action to implement targets and priorities set, at all levels, ensuring thatthey take into account women's interests and needs, to improve their situation andincrease their contribution to the development process.

3. Ensure that national plans and strategies are sensitive to the needs and problems ofdifferent categories of women and of women of different age groups, with specialattention to the most disadvantaged in rural and urban

areas, and on behalf of womenwho are victims of particularly discriminatory attitudes.

4. Establish interdisciplinary and multisectoral machinery with adequate staff and budgetfor accelerating the achievement of equal opportunity for women and their fullintegration in national life, through investigations and recommendations for neededlegislation, policies and programmes and priorities

5.Provide constitutional and legislative guarantee of the principle of non-discrimination onthe ground of sex, and equal rights and responsibilities of women and men.

6. Review and reform the legislations affecting the status of women in the light of human rights principles and internationally accepted standards, providing adequate enforcementmachinery and appropriate measures to inform and aid women to utilise their rights.

7. Encourage involvement of women in the promotion of international co-operation, for peace and disarmament and in combating colonialism, neocolonialism, foreigndomination, apartheid and racial discrimination.

8.Establish goals, strategies and time-tables for increasing within the decade 1975-1985 the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and public functions at all levels.

9. Provide equal opportunities for both sexes in education and training at all levels,coordinating educational, training and employment strategies, through :

i. target dates for eradication of illiteracy with high priority for women in 16-25 age group;

ii. free and compulsory primary education, with text books, transport and school lunches;

iii. integrated training programmes for rural women to accelerate their economic andsocial development, with special emphasis on modern methods and technology inagriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, cooperatives, entrepreneurship,commerce, marketing as well as health, nutrition, and family planning;

iv. formal and informal programmes to change social attitudes to women'seducation, training and employment towards equality, new occupations andchanging roles;

v. research to identify discriminatory practices.

10. Formulate policies and action programmes to promote equality in work, through:

i. legislation stipulating the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of sexor marital status;

ii. guaranteeing right to equal pay for equal work;

iii. special efforts to foster positive attitudes towards women's employment irrespective of marital status, among employers, workers and society at large, to eliminate sex-typed divisions of labour;

iv. special efforts to eliminate unemployment and underemployment of women;

v. support for self-employment and self-help activities of women specially in ruralareas;

vi. establishing specific target dates for achieving substantial increase in the number of qualified women employed in skilled and technical work, and increasing the number of women in management and policy-making in commerce, industry and trade;

vii. opening to women the access to institutional and on-the-job-training;

viii. ensuring the right to maternity leave with a guarantee of returning to their former employment and to nursing breaks to all women workers;

ix. special attention to multilateral approaches to combination of family and workresponsibilities, e.g. general reduction and/or staggering of working hours, flexibleworking hours, part-time work for women and men, child-care facilities,etc., with protection of their economic and social rights;

x. review in the light of scientific and technological knowledge, of protectivelegislation applying to women only for revision, repeal or extension to allworkers as necessary;

xi. enforcement of minimum wages and their application to cottage industries anddomestic work;

xii. elimination of exploitation of female labour particularly young girls;

xiii. elimination of discriminatory treatment of women in national social securityschemes;

xiv. stimulating efforts of employers', workers' and voluntary organisations to
improve women's employment;

xv. increase rural women's participation in the formulation of national plans for
integrated rural development.

11. Pay particular attention to women's special health needs and child health services, by involving them as active participants in the health planning, decision-making anddelivery processes at all levels, and preparing village women as health workers.

12. Integrate and co-ordinate family planning programmes with health, nutrition andotherservices, reduce mortality and morbidity.

13. Protect by appropriate legislation and policy, the rights of women in all the various formsof the family, including nuclear family, the extended family, consensual union and the
single parent family.

14. Frame marriage laws in conformity with international standards, ensuring that women and men have the same right to the free choice of a spouse and enter marriage only withtheirfree consent, minimum age for marriage to enable them to complete education andofficial registration.

15. Abolish all institutions and practices which infringe such rights.

16. Establish family courts

17. Investigate and adopt appropriate measures for the protection and needs of (i) migrant women, and (ii) slum women.

18. Take specific legislative measures to combat prostitution and the illicit traffic inwomen,with special programmes for rehabilitation of the victims, and ratify United Nations Conventions for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of theProstitution of Others.

19. Establish a scientific and reliable data base, and develop suitable economic and social indicators sensitive to the particular situation and needs of women as an integral part ofnational and international programme of statistics.

20. Collect and analyse all census and survey data relating to characteristics ofindividuals,household and family composition, to measure:

(a) the participation of women in local and national planning and policy-making in all sectors of national life;

(b) the extent of women's activities in food production, water and fuel supply,marketing and transportation;

(c) the economic and social contribution of housework and other domestic chores, handicrafts and other home-based economic activities;

(d) the effect on the national economy of women's activities as consumers of goods and services;

(e) the relative time spent on economic and household activities and on leisure by girls and women compared to boys and men;

(f) the quality of life (e.g. job satisfaction, income situation, family characteristics and use of leisure time).

National statistical offices should adhere to the standards established by the United Nations and its specialised agencies for data collection, tabulation and analysis.

21. Encourage and support national, regional and international research to criticallyreviewthe image of women and men portrayed by the media, and increase women in that media management, to correct negative role of media.

22. Undertake their own regular review and appraisal of progress made to achieve thegoalsand objectives of the Plan and to report on its implementation to the Economic and SocialCouncil paying special attention to the problems of rural women.

23. Trade Unions should increase women's participation at all levels, and have special programmes to promote equality of opportunity for jobs and training for women workers and leadership training for women.

International agencies should:

24. Assist Governments to develop specific projects and programmes, and facilitate free flowof information and ideas among countries, and provide a clearing house for information,experience and ideas.

25. Prepare an inventory of social and economic indicators relevant to the analysis of thestatus of women not later than 1980 in co-operation with the interested specialized agencies, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the regionalcommissions and other agencies.

26. Proclaim the decade 1975-1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality,Development, Peace, to ensure that national and international action is sustainedthroughout the period.

27. Co-ordinate the activities of various international agencies working to improve thesituation of women through the existing machinery. Each Organisation should evaluatewhat it has done and enhance its contribution by specific measures needed to implementthe Plan.

28. Increase women's involvement in policy-making at the international level. The Secretariatof the international organisations should eliminate any provisions or practices in theiremployment policies that may be discriminatory against women.

29. Undertake a comprehensive and thorough review and appraisal of progress made in
meeting the goals of this Plan at regular intervals.

10.7 LET US SUM UP

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), established in 1946 by the U.N. Economic and Social Council to promote the rights of women in political, economic, civil, social, and educational fields, successfully lobbied the U.N. General Assembly to designate 1975 the International Women's Year. The highlight of the year was the first World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City, which recommended a U.N. Decade for Women (1976–1985). The decade sought to address the needs of women in what were then known as the first, second, and third worlds with a tripartite theme of equality, peace,

and development by making recommendations for action at local, national, and international levels.

10.8 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. What was the purpose of the decade of women?

.

10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

The United Nations has declared 1975 International Women's Year, and the women's movement hopes that more than mere lip service will be paid to upgrading the status of women throughout the world. "We have it in our power to make this Year a truly valuable and important advance in the position of women in the social, economic, cultural and political process," said U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim in December 1974, "or, alternatively, merely to make it a ceremonial occasion devoid of practical meaning."

The United Nations is highlighting the year by sponsoring a world conference on women June 19-July 2, 1975, in Mexico City. It will be the first major inter-governmental meeting ever held that is devoted to the status of women in society. Participating nations will discuss the current roles of women and their involvement in national and international affairs. The delegates will be called on to approve a "World Plan of Action," outlining objectives and goals for improving the position of women over the next 10 years.

Women are still subject to various forms of discrimination, whether overt or subtle, in nearly every country. Though women make up about half of the world's population, they are vastly underrepresented in public life almost everywhere. Some of the most obvious forms of discrimination can be attributed to religious law and custom. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the religious police have the power to spray women's legs with black paint if they appear in public without the traditional dress. Dr. PromillaKapur, a specialist in the sociology of women, has written that in a number of Hindu households in India, the birth of a daughter is cause for sorrow, while the birth of a son is cause for much attention and celebration.

10.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Olcott, Jocelyn (2017). International Women's Year: The Greatest Consciousness-Raising Event in History. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-674-46885-6.
2. Teltsch, Kathleen (10 May 1974). "U.N. Wants It to Be More Than a 'Ladies' Meeting'". The New York Times. New York City, New York. p. 43. Retrieved 8 May 2017.
3. "Part II: Background of the Conference". Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year: Mexico City 19 June-2 July 1975 (PDF) (Report). New York City, New York: United Nations. 1976. Archived from the original (PDF) on 8 May 2017. Retrieved 8 May 2017.

.

UNIT XI –PROGRESS OF WOMEN

Structure

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, the central role of women in society has ensured the stability, progress and long-term development of nations.

Globally, women comprise 43 percent of the world's agricultural labor force – rising to 70 percent in some countries. For instance, across Africa, 80 percent of the agricultural production comes from small farmers, most of whom are rural women. It's widely accepted that agriculture can be the engine of growth and poverty reduction in developing nations. Women, notably mothers, play the largest role in decision-making about family meal planning and diet. And, women self-report more often their initiative in preserving child health and nutrition.

While on one hand, India has seen an increased percentage of literacy among women, and women are now entering professional fields, the practices of female infanticide, poor health conditions and lack of education still persisting still continue. Even the patriarchal ideology of the home being a woman's 'real domain' and marriage being her ultimate destiny hasn't changed much. The matrimonial advertisements, demanding girls of the same caste, with fair skin and slim figure, or the much criticised fair and lovely ads, are indicators of the slow changing social mores. If one looks at the status of women then and now, one has to look at two sides of the coin; one side which is promising, and one side which is bleak.

11.2 OBJECTIVES

In this you will be able to get a clear idea of

1. The progress made by the women society in general and specific
2. The steps taken by the various organizations in making the progress

11.3 PROGRESS OF WOMEN

When our country got its independence, the participation of women nationalists was widely acknowledged. When the Indian Constitution was formulated, it granted equal rights to women, considering them legal citizens of the country and as an equal to men in terms of freedom and opportunity.

The sex ratio of women at this time was slightly better than what it is today, standing at 945 females per 1000 males. Yet the condition of women screamed a different reality.

They were relegated to the household, and made to submit to the male-dominated patriarchal society, as has always been prevalent in our country. Indian women, who fought as equals with men in the nationalist struggle, were not given that free public space anymore. They became homemakers, and were mainly meant to build a strong home to support their men who were to build the newly independent country. Women were reduced to being second class citizens. The national female literacy rate was an alarmingly low 8.6%. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for girls was 24.8% at primary level and 4.6% at the upper primary level (in the 11-14 years age group). There existed insoluble social and cultural barriers to education of women and access to organised schooling.Women's empowerment and economic growth are closely linked. Removing the barriers for women's equality in the labour force may crucially benefit the health of children and mothers, improve girls' education, and reduce fertility rates, among other things.

"When women's potential as economic agents is unleashed – women's rights take leaps ahead and it creates a ripple effect for societies. Women and girls are a strong resource – 51% of the world's population, whose potential – when activated – can bring a boost to the economy, bring new ideas, variety and new perspectives.

Unfortunately, women tend to have less access to formal financial institutions and saving mechanisms. While 55% of men report having an account at a formal financial institution, only 47% of women do worldwide At a time of unprecedented global movement for women's rights, equality and justice, let's join forces to ensure all voices of girls and women around the world are being heard. The time is now to push for gender equality and empower all women and girls!

11.3.1 Family

Women are the primary caretakers of children and elders in every country of the world. International studies demonstrate that when the economy and political organization of a society change, women take the lead in helping the family adjust to new realities and challenges. They are likely to be the prime initiator of outside assistance, and play an important role in facilitating (or hindering) changes in family life.

"Rural women play a key role in supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being."

11.3.2 Work

Today, the median female share of the global workforce is 45.4 percent. Women's formal and informal labor can transform a community from a relatively autonomous society to a participant in the national economy. Despite significant obstacles, women's small businesses in rural developing communities not only can be an extended family's lifeline, but can form a networked economic foundation for future generations. The role of women in the urban and rural workforce has expanded exponentially in recent decades.

The theme for International Women's Day 2019 "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change," was chosen to identify innovative ways to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, accelerating the 2030 Agenda, building momentum for the effective implementation of the new U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. Of course, women's opportunities still lag behind those of men worldwide. But, the historic and current role of women is indisputable.

"When women are empowered and can claim their rights and access to land, leadership, opportunities and choices, economies grow, food security is enhanced and prospects are improved for current and future generations."

11.3.3Education

The contribution of women to a society's transition from pre-literate to literate likewise is undeniable. Basic education is key to a nation's ability to develop and achieve sustainability targets. Research has shown that education can improve agricultural productivity, enhance the status of girls and women, reduce population growth rates, enhance environmental protection, and widely raise the standard of living.

It is the mother in the family who most often urges children of both genders to attend – and stay – in school. The role of women is at the front end of the chain of improvements leading to the family's, the community's long-term capacity.

11.4CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD

A women's role has changed tremendously and is making its greatest impact in our society today. Many years ago, women's contribution to society was limited and controlled by men. Women are standing tall and are playing a major role in many important areas. Women's role has changed at an accelerating rate and have part in areas such as Politics, Professional Training Jobs, Medicine,Business and Law. Formerly they were not part of any political matter, but they have advanced in many aspects. For example, women have attained power and have been growing in political office.

Though a number of constitutional amendments were made for women's social, economic and political benefits, yet they were never effective to bring a radical change in the situation. Women had only the role of a 'good wife' to play, and if a woman ventured out to work, she was seen as a bad woman, going against societal norms. Women were expected to cook food and eat only after the men, with whatever meager amount of food is left. This led to rampant malnutrition among women, and an extremely poor health status. Around 500 women were reported to die every day due to pregnancy related problems due to malnutrition, and getting married before 18. It was only by the 1960s, that a few educated women began to see themselves increasingly change from a mere guardian of home to a legitimate participant in the discourse of life. The country saw the first undercurrent of female discontent with the system.

With time, a lot has changed since those dark ages of the 1950s for the women. Though at some levels like dowry, crimes like rape, sexual harassment at office or public places, and molestation, eve-teasing, even after over sixty years of independence women are still exploited, which is the shameful side of our country. Yet one can't deny that the situation has improved since the earlier times. Women, who now represent 48.2% of the population, are getting access to education, and then employment. From 5.4 million girls enrolled at the primary level in 1950-51 to 61.1 million girls in 2004-05. At the upper primary level, the enrolment increased from 0.5 million girls to 22.7 million girls.If we divide society and view it as a modern one and an old- fashioned one, we might fool ourselves and make ourselves feel better at the same time. The roles of women have come in varied forms as they've occupied more visibility, space and varied roles in the modern society talking in the context of Nepal. The varied roles have certainly brought in pressures too as women juggle modern society, its expectations and old-fashioned elders and individuals who coexist in this modern spectrum.
Whilst it is important to acknowledge these advances, the bigger picture is of the old-fashioned society that we largely live in and around. The changing roles of women has enabled and empowered many and we need to combine such positive and progressive energies of all genders together to ensure that this changing role of women is not only limited to the "modern society" but taken to societies across the country in a suitable manner.
Having visited rural locations where many skills were being taught to women. Visibility of a woman in a respectable and in position should not only be for the city as the communities outside the city are desperately waiting for more positive examples of what a woman can achieve. We will only experience and see a bigger change in the role of women once we view society as a whole.
During India's national struggle, the position of women took a turn for the better, writes Abhay Shah, 17, a Correspondent from Siliguri in India. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad began to think deeply about the urgent need for women's emancipation.
Gandhi, Nehru and Prasad realised that so long as women of the country were not uplifted and granted equal status with men in all walks of life, India could neither progress nor make any significant advance in any field.
Women have occupied top ranks and attained immense success in all fields such as sports, politics, performing arts, police, administration, and medicine. Mother Teresa, P. T. Usha, M. S. Subbulakshmi, Kiran Bedi, Dr. Padmavathi, Sushma Swaraj, the great environmentalist and social activist Medha Patkar and PromillaKalhan have become great names in their fields of their work.
Now, with the encouragement of co-education, women have cast off the imposed inferiority complex and are marching side by side with men in every walk of life. Women are proving to be academically better and socially more active. When we come across the results of competitive examinations in all India civil services and Indian universities, we are happily surprised to note that women capture most of the merit seats. They are also aware of the fast-changing social milieu and they are making sustained efforts to scale the ladders of social progress by dint of their zeal and dynamism. They are contributing extensively towards the social transformation and building of the nation.

Writers like Mahashweta Devi, Pratibha Roy, and Arundati Roy have established their credentials in the literary world and contributed to the literacy excellence of the nation. It is heartening to know that educated women are very keen on taking up administration work, doing fantastic work as officers, typists, clerks and receptionists. It has been noticed that they are quick to understand every aspect of the work and have won applause from the bureaucracy.

Women are no longer considered to be physically unfit for military and police departments. In the whole length and breadth of India, everyone has read and heard of Kiran Bedi, an IPS officer with an iron hand and a soft heart craving for reformation in the state of prisons in India. India doesn't lack in woman power, the leadership taken by Ahluwalia means we shall soon have skilled women pilots to take up the realm of the sky.

In order to make optimum use of our woman power, we must liberate Indian women from many social taboos. However, mere legislation cannot emancipate the lot of our women. This needs a radical change in our mental make-up and our social structure. For this, we shall have to foster a social emancipating spirit in our everyday life.

To quote former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen, "Women in India have now become more aware of their rights as individuals and they are now opting for higher positions at work, at the same time being a perfect housewife at home". This is the stage that women have reached today.

Emotional, affectionate, caring and yet firm, a woman is the perennial source of inspiration for man in the odyssey of his life. At the same time, women like Golda Meir, Indira Gandhi, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Margaret Thatcher, and Chandrika Kumaratunga have left their indelible mark at the international level. Women have struggled hard to establish an identity of their own. In the present chaotic world, only women can handle any difficulty with patience and perseverance.

Victor Hugo once said, "Men have sight, women insight." Women run to extremes, and can take advanced measures for the progress of the country with their power of mental strength and extraordinary talent.

11.5LET'S SUM UP

The role of women is always changing it always has been. Althoughthe roles of women in a positive way regardless of whether she is a homemaker or a working woman or both. However, the society has not always been appreciative of them in the past and while the situation is changing, we still have a long way to go. While it is a long shot, I hope we live in a better future where gender is just a biological aspect and everyone works together in every. The discrimination that women faced in the past and the pain and hardships it caused was the reason that the society is still patriarchal to this day. But now, she has been doing her own thing slowly evolving to a liberal society. She does what she wants to do and all of us get rid of the patriarchal attitude that takes us nowhere in the future, everyone should open their eyes and minds and learn to appreciate her more for her contributions.

11.6UNIT END EXCERISES

1. Comment on the contemporary women's status in India.

11.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Though a number of constitutional amendments were made for women's social, economic and political benefits, yet they were never effective to bring a radical change in the situation. Women had only the role of a 'good wife' to play, and if a woman ventured out to work, she was seen as a bad woman, going against societal norms. Women were expected to cook food and eat only after the men, with whatever meager amount of food is left. This led to rampant malnutrition among women, and an extremely poor health status. Around 500 women were reported to die every day due to pregnancy related problems due to malnutrition, and getting married before 18.It was only by the 1960s, that a few educated women began to see themselves increasingly change from a mere guardian of home to a legitimate participant in the discourse of life. The country saw the first undercurrent of female discontent with the system.

Women have occupied top ranks and attained immense success in all fields such as sports, politics, performing arts, police, administration, and medicine. Mother Teresa, P. T. Usha, M. S. Subbulakshmi, Kiran Bedi, Dr. Padmavathi, Sushma Swaraj, the great environmentalist and social activist Medha Patkar and PromillaKalhan have become great names in their fields of their work.

Women are no longer considered to be physically unfit for military and police departments. In the whole length and breadth of India, everyone has read and heard of Kiran Bedi, an IPS officer with an iron hand and a soft heart craving for reformation in the state of prisons in India. India doesn't lack in woman power, the leadership taken by Ahluwalia means we shall soon have skilled women pilots to take up the realm of the sky.

11.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Borthwick, Meredith (2015). The changing role of women in Bengal, 1849-1905. Princeton University Press.
2. Brinks, Ellen (2016). Anglophone Indian Women Writers, 1870–1920. Routledge.
3. Chakravarti, Uma (2003). Gendering Caste Through a Feminist Lens. Popular Prakashan. ISBN 9788185604541.
4. Chaudhur, Maitrayee, ed. (2004). Feminism in India. Issues in Contemporary Indian Feminism. New Delhi: Kali for Women & Women Unlimited.
5. Choudhary, Renu (June 2013). "Women in Indian society: a historical perspective" (PDF). Madhya Pradesh Journal of Social Sciences. 18 (1): 41–53.[permanent dead link][permanent dead link]
6. Forbes, Geraldine (1999). Women in modern India. Cambridge University Press., A major scholarly survey.

UNIT XII – ISSUES AND PROBLEMS OF WOMEN

Structure

12.1 INTRODUCTION

India is a country where women are given the status of a goddess. However, the problems they have to face just show the opposite of this concept. On hand they worship them as goddesses and on the other, they abuse them endlessly and consider them inferior. India women always had some problem or the other to face in society. People evolved and so did the problems, they did not go away but changed from one to another. We need to realize these problems and act on them fast to help our country thrive.

In the ancient Indian society women were adored and worshiped as goddesses. However in the middle age, the status of women got down to a great extent. Women are considered in the society only to perform duties like bring up children, caring every family member, and other household activities. There are old and traditional faith of people coming out for years that men are for thy field whereas women are only for the home. Now-a-days, women are breaking all the barriers of social issues and problems against them in the society. They are getting ahead and enjoying equality of status in almost all fields because of being financially independent and economically sound.

12.2 OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you understand

- Issues and problems faced by women in early days and today's contemporary world

12.3 PROBLEMS RELATED TO WOMEN

When in the early days, there were severe issues like the Sati system, no widow remarriage, devadasi system and more. While most of them are not prevalent now, there are new issues that women face. They may be not the same but they are still as severe as the early ones. They hinder the growth of a country and make the women feel inferior.

Firstly, violence against women is a very grave issue faced by women in India. It is happening almost every day in various forms. People turn a blind eye to it instead of doing something. Domestic violence happens more often than you think. Further, there is also dowry-related harassment, marital rape, genital mutilation and more.

Next up, we also have the issues of gender discrimination. Women are not considered equal to men. They face discrimination in almost every place, whether at the workplace or at home. Even the little girls become a victim of this discrimination. The patriarchy dictates a woman's life unjustly.

Moreover, there is also a lack of female education and the gender pay gap. Women in rural areas are still denied education for being a female. Similarly, women do not get equal pay as men for doing the same work. On top of that, they also face workplace harassment and exploitation.

While we explore the biases against women in the employment sector, we must also appreciate the role a woman can play at our workplace. In response to my survey question about how the presence of a woman changes things in a team, many felt that people start to behave well. "I think it makes the group more cheerful, in general. People become better behaved as well", wrote a respondent. Some feel that the group becomes less toxic and more stable, while others lauded a woman's multitasking skills. These responses reiterate the fact that we need balanced groups at workplaces to increase productivity and job satisfaction.

The biases held against women are archaic, and we must shed them to create a vibrant and productive workplace. We have come a long way from the times of our grandparents where women found it difficult to step out of their houses, so we must keep up the momentum to enable more women to pursue their dreams confidently. We must get rid of the social barriers that keep women from professional success. We must not undermine anyone's talent because of their gender.

Empowering women in jobs and businesses is a crucial step towards gender equality. Let's give women, not just a chance to venture out of their homes, but to excel in their careers and to achieve their potential. It is our responsibility, as an egalitarian society, to give them the opportunity and the environment in which they are free to do so.

Earlier to this woman were facing a lot of problems because of male dominated, patriarchal society system, practice of old traditional believes, etc. Women were only responsible to the traditional roles like child bearing and child rearing. In the modern world, where women status has been improved a little while, still they are facing problems. They have to perform both family and professional responsibilities together without the help of their husbands. In some cases, the condition of women become more embarrassed when they get tortured by their family members instead of getting help. Sexual harassment is more common at homes as well as in the offices by the family members, relatives, neighbors, friends, boss, etc. They have to suffer a lot in their daily life to nourish their career as well as saving their family relationships.

12.4 CONTEMPORARY ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN

Many studies reveal that both professional and non-professional women experience heavy stress due to gender bias. Although women have proved the best of their abilities in various fields of work at par with men, they still continue to have a grip over their household responsibilities. In spite of

their hard work, women have been given second importance in their field of work.

Gender Disparity:

Patriarchy and gender inequality in society is the main cause of women's deprivation by way of health, food and nutrition, more susceptible to mortality and contributing to unbalanced male female ratio as well as in the sphere of education, employment, wages and that of political representation. Women are treated by men only as consumers, sex objects or reproductive machines as a result of which their status in the family and society has been demoted. Subsequently this has led to increasing violence and denial of human rights, liberty, equality, justice.

The patriarchal family system that prevails in India gives more rights and authority to the male enabling them to enjoy more power over the female in the family. Women are considered inferior, secondary individuals to men. So they are suppressed, oppressed, harassed, subjugated and deprived of even their basic rights till date. Atrocities and crimes are committed against them by their own family members.

Women used to face innumerable problems in their post married life for their family in different dimensions such as a bride due to no or less dowry, as a wife not bearing a male child, as a widow responsible for her husband's death. Above all if they are working women, they are expected to accomplish all the activities from dawn to dusk to satisfy needs of all family members. So though women play a key role in the socio economic development of a country yet they are discriminated against almost in every walk of life right from the very earliest stage.

Dual Responsibility:

Women's attitude towards their stereotyped (traditional) role is rapidly changing and their participation in different job sectors is increasing alarmingly due to low economic condition of family, advancement in the field of women education, granting of more liberty, rights and privileges to women.

Managing both the family and job responsibility on the part of the women today are quite tough and challenging. It is very difficult for them to carry dual responsibilities at home and the workplace. It creates psycho-socio problems both in the family and professional field; despite the fact that it provides economic security. Thereby it had done more harm than good for which women are experiencing stress and frustration in life.

12.5 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Dowry

Dowry so-called "Dahej" in Indian society. It is a based ritual of transfer of property, including cash, vehicles, household goods, etc. A Dowry is defined as the property that is received by a man from the family of his would-be wife during the process of their Marriage. Being illegal- this ritual is still practiced all around India. Gifts and cash are broadly exchanged between the two families calling it to be a Tradition that has been followed from ages.

It is believed, that is the boy/groom is well-educated and a decent job with a good source of income his value automatically ascends. Hence he becomes eligible for the Dowry system. The strange thing is that this ritual is highly followed almost everyone in India no matter what caste, creed or society they belong to. Thus the dowry system could be stated as a real challenge that a woman's face.

Women Trafficking:

Famous for enforcing young girls or woman to enter the world of Prostitution or Drug Dealing as means for their livelihood for survival this is another most threatening situation for a woman. Once trapped in this cage, the possibility of getting free becomes next to impossible. This so-called business not only hears a woman physically but mentally and socially too. She eventually loses her identity, feels isolated and becomes unfamiliar with the outside world.

The shocking truth of this industry is all ages is not a limitation her youngest to the eldest woman are pushed into it willingly or unwillingly either-way resulting to lost childhood of little.

Killing Girl Child (Female-infanticide):

Another most disheartening issue that a woman's face. We hear a lot of cases every other day related to the killing of a girl child in the womb or soon after she takes the birth. A nation like India is still fighting against female infanticide. It's a bizarre act done by some shameless and heartless people who call them themselves to be human. It looks like it's not the mother to decide whether to keep the child or not. Due to specific laws and new schemes, the act has descended to some extent but hasn't stopped totally.

Thus, it still needs to be uprooted. This discrimination based on gender is for sure, isn't genuine, but mindsets of people even today revolves around some old myths or misconceptions that needs to end soon.

Divorce:

Our society claims a divorced/single woman to be outcast. Instead of sympathizing or consolation, these women have to face harsh treatment from society. We can blame our morals and customs that have been followed and practiced for a long time for this inhuman and unacceptable behaviour. It is being believed that a woman is a shadow of her Husband, and without her shadow/husband, she is valueless.

The strange and hard to trust fact here is that their relatives and family even criticize not only the outside people but these women. Although the case is not the same everywhere, it is since not everybody is the same by nature. If there's a world of aloofness on the other side, there's another world that is full of support, sympathy, love and care of our people. But still, the ratio is higher in the first case.

Illiteracy and traditional beliefs:

Illiteracy and traditional beliefs and practices of family have prevented a great majority of women from access to health care and knowledge about their rights and privileges resulting high rate of maternal mortality and

morbidity. In our society male members of the family are supposed to eat fresh and nutrition's food in comparison to women because either they are the earning member or head of the family or they are supposed to be more important than female members.

The high mortality rates among women as revealed by maternal death due to anemia, toxemia, hemorrhage and abortions indicate that women health in general and reproductive health in particular are neglected due to her illiteracy and ignorance about her health and balanced diet. Healthy women produces healthy child but from analysis of data of various studies it is observed that nutrient intake is significantly less among illiterate pregnant women. Illiteracy limits women's ability to earn money and participation in decision making in the male dominated families.

Statistics shows that higher the female literacy level, lower is the fertility rate and birth rate. Maternal mortality are normally higher in states with a low literacy. Illiteracy and low educational status result in lack of information, knowledge. There is a saying that if you educate a boy you educate an individual but if you educate a girl you educate a family.

Social Stigma and Poverty Condition:

Crime and violence against women are on the rise. This is only due to social stigma that women are weaker section of society. Poverty condition compels the poor women to sell their minor girl like commodity and give away their grown-up daughter into slavery to another family to perform household activities. They are subject to victim of STD. (Sexual Transmitted Disease) AIDS due to unprotected sex as they are able to protest.

Due to financial constraints and acute poverty, young girls are often lured away by middle men and brokers with a false promise of being offered alluring jobs. In the process they are after cheated with sexual harassment which ultimately ends up in dubious condition. Lack of family and society support and consciousness of moral values create problems with the in-laws, dowry and torture for women.

Last but not the least the lack of self-confidence is the main cause of women problem. Women themselves are willing to aberrate the female sex. They are interested to participate in obscene picture and advertisement and wearing indecent and provocative clothes. They are quarrelling with parents for the dowry. They are creating conflict with in-laws instead of co-operating with them.

The feeling of helplessness and frustration in women regarding their own problems must be taken care of without delay. Both the family and society should work together to eliminate such problems and give a woman the much-neededself-confidence and self-respect.

However, during these few decades, industrialization, urbanization, westernization and spread of women education have brought about drastic changes in women's, lives but still they are facing multifarious and multidimensional problems. Despite so much hue and cry in the whole world for equal treatment of-both men and women in every aspect of life we are still lagging behind in achieving the goal.

12.7 LET US SUM UP

Women in the Indian society have been considered as inferior than men for many years. Because of such type of inferiority, they have to face various issues and problems in their life. They have to go extra miles than men to prove themselves equivalent to men. People in the middle age were considering women as key to destruction so they never allowed women to go outside and participate in the social activities like men. Still in the modern age, women have to face many more problems in their daily life and struggle a lot to establish their career. Still there are many parents who prefer to have only boy baby and allow education to boys only. Women for them are only medium to keep family happy and healthy.

A woman is seen in the society with more intense ridicule sight and become at higher risk of honor killing if she is involved in the love marriage or inter caste love marriage. Women face a lot of challenges because of the existence of patriarchal society, child bearing and family care roles, deep rooted cultural norms, etc. in the Indian society. Women in India do not have equal access to autonomy, mobility to outside the home, social freedom, etc. than men. Some of the problems faced by the women are because of their domestic responsibilities, cultural and social specified roles, etc.

12.8 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. Bring out the key issues and challenges faced by women in contemporary India.

12.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Gender Disparity:

Patriarchy and gender inequality in society is the main cause of women's deprivation by way of health, food and nutrition, more susceptible to mortality and contributing to unbalanced male female ratio as well as in the sphere of education, employment, wages and that of political representation. Women are treated by men only as consumers, sex objects or reproductive machines as a result of which their status in the family and society has been demoted. Subsequently this has led to increasing violence and denial of human rights, liberty, equality, justice.

Dual Responsibility:

Women's attitude towards their stereotyped (traditional) role is rapidly changing and their participation in different job sectors is increasing alarmingly due to low economic condition of family, advancement in the field of women education, granting of more liberty, rights and privileges to women.Managing both the family and job responsibility on the part of the women today are quite tough and challenging. It is very difficult for them to carry dual responsibilities at home and the workplace. It creates psycho-socio problems both in the family and professional field; despite the fact that it provides economic security. Thereby it had done more harm than good for which women are experiencing stress and frustration in life.

12.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Karat, B. (2005). Survival and emancipation: notes from Indian women's struggles. Three Essays Collective. Karat, B. (1997). The Multiple Struggles of Women. Frontline, 14(19)
2. Chakraborty, S. (2013). Empowering the Tribal Women through Education: Issue of Social Justice with Reference of West Bengal. Afro Asian Journal of Anthropology and Social Policy, 4(1), 24-28. Chandra, S. K. (1993). Women's development: problems and prospects
3. Majumdar, M. (2004). Social status of women in India. New Delhi: Dominant Publishers and Distributors. Sarkar, L., &Sivaramayya, B. (Eds.). (1994). Women and law: contemporary problems. New Delhi: Vikas Publications
4. Agapiou, A. (2002). Perceptions of gender roles and attitudes toward work among male and female operatives in the Scottish construction industry. Construction Management & Economics, 20(8), 697-705.

UNIT XIII –WOMEN ISSUES

Structure

13.1 INTRODUCTION

The condition of women in India has always been a matter of grave concern. Since the past several centuries, the women of India were never given equal status and opportunities as compared to that of their male counterparts. The patriarchal nature of Indian society, which even though gives respect to women as they are our mothers and sisters, has greatly hampered both the independence as well as the safety of women. Women in India continue to face violence from womb to the tomb. While in womb they face the ever looming threat of feticide and after birth, they are subject to various forms of violence and harassment at different points of their lives, at the hands of different actors, ranging from their parents to their husbands to the members of general public to their employers.

Despite all theconstitutional and legal measures there is lot of atrocities and injustices prevailing in India. It is an irony that, a country where religious and cultural traditions keep women in high esteem, and women are worshiped in the form of many deities, atrocities against them are on the rise. According to 1992-93 figures, only 9.2% of the households in India were headed by females. However, approximately 35% of the households below the poverty line were found to be headed by females

13.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit your will get an understanding about

- Various unrestricted violence against women
- The issues of women that need attention

13.3 PROSTITUTION AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Urban public space includes all the areas in between built structures and other spaces the public is attracted to. In addition to streets, roads, public toilets, bus stops, railway stations, modes of transport, promenades and parks and playgrounds, the new “hang-out” spaces of Indian metropolitan cities, like shopping malls, coffee shops, movie theatres and restaurants, are also included. The term safety includes not just the actual physical and psychological impacts of an act of aggression or violence but also the fear or anxiety associated with the anticipation of violence in an urban public space. In the light of increasing sexual assault on women in Indian cities, there has been public outrage against the apathy by government agencies to control the situation. The violence that often defines women in society has reached endemic proportions, becoming ordinary instead of extraordinary. Violence,

necessarily, is not physical (like rape- which is the most brutal form of violence), but it may also include- stalking, voyeurism, etc.

Women and children often give up on the right to education or a livelihood as a trade-off for safety. The safety of women in urban areas is welded to a truly inclusive city that affirms the special needs of all citizens, especially those who are disabled, poor or belong to different ethnicities and participatory decision-making that involves strong partnerships between civil society organizations, governments and urban local authorities, lawenforcing agencies is the need of the hour. Cities should be spaces for opportunities and personal growth rather than sites of exclusion and assault. However, more often than not, the experiences of women across the world suggest that, they turn out to be the latter, especially in contemporary Indian cities. Today, there is a growing realization about the need to create a more secure working, living and commuting environment for women in urban centers. Studies across the globe have shown that safety in public spaces ranks a close second after domestic or partner violence and sexual violence with respect to women's safety concerns. Nonetheless, this is not a concern generally taken seriously in large-scale planning agendas. Space is not neutral and cities are designed for the neutral user.

In India, the neutral user is usually "the middle- or upper-class young male, a heterosexual who is able-bodied." Cities can be designed to be more inclusive, but only when designs reflect an awareness of how characteristics such as age, sex, sexuality, caste, religion, economic status and difference in ability lead individuals to experience the same space quite differently.

Possible reasons for increasing sexual violence against women in India:

(a) Poorly lit urban spaces coupled with inadequate police patrolling are favorable for increased sexual violence.

(b) Lack of stringent laws for punishing sexual assault is compounded by inefficient criminal justice system. It is evident from the rate of conviction in rape cases, which is continuously declining since the few decades. Such a situation serves to be an incentive, rather than detrimental, for committing violence against women.

(c) Increasing objectification of women by media as an object for sexual satisfaction.

(d) Inefficient and apathetic attitude of law enforcement agencies.

(e) Patriarchal structure of Indian society.

13.4 DISCRIMINATION

Gender is a common term where as gender discrimination is meant only for women, because females are the only victims of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is not biologically determined but it is determined by socially and the discrimination can be changed by the proper and perpetuate efforts. Denial of equality, rights and opportunity and suppresment in any form on the basis of gender is gender discrimination. Half of the world's population is females. They are doing two-third of work of the total work in the world but received only one-tenth of the world's total income. Nearly two-third of the women is illiterates and they have possessed only one percent of the total world's assets. In the world only one-fourth of the

families are headed by female. India is a male dominant society and gender discrimination is customised habitually.

From web to death females are facing lots of discrimination againstthem.

Some of them are:

™ Abortion of female gravida with the help of scanning.

™ Feticide (By giving liquid extract from cactus / opuntia, givingraw paddy to new born femalebaby, by pressing the face by pillowor by breaking the female baby's neck)

™ Not giving enough and nutritious food

™ Not allowing to go to school (Denial of education)

™ Not giving needy health care while in ill health

™ Early marriage

™ Eve teasing, Rape and Sexual harassment

™ Dowry

™ Divorce, Destitution even for silly or without any reason.

Causes of Gender Discrimination

The causes of gender discrimination are

™ Educational backwardness

™ Caste

™ Religious beliefs

™ Culture

™ On the name of family history

™ Customs and beliefs

™ Races

Low income

™ Unemployment

™ Society

™ Family situation and

™ Attitudes

Like male or even above them female plays important role in thefamily and national development. But her contribution is not recognizedby the male dominant society.

13.5 PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN

Women in the workforce earning wages or a salary are part of a modern phenomenon, one that developed at the same time as the growth of paid employment for men, but women have been challenged by inequality in the workforce. Until modern times, legal and cultural practices, combined with the inertia of longstanding religious and educational conventions, restricted women's entry and participation in the workforce. However, over the past three decades, workplace has become a much more diverse environment. With women representing 24.4 per cent of the total workforce in India, personal security has become central to their physical, intellectual, emotional, economic and spiritual well-being. Violence against women in the work place takes place in all countries throughout the world and takes many forms, including sexual harassment and bullying. It affects all professions and sectors and particularly women living in poverty as they are more likely to be exposed to exploitation and abuse in informal labor settings like, for example, women migrant workers.

Small surveys in Asia-Pacific countries indicate that 30 to 40 per cent of women workers report some form of harassment – verbal, physical or sexual. Workplace violence against women is understood to include physical assault, threatening behavior, bullying, verbal abuse, and various forms of harassment. Workplace violence usually occurs in a workplace setting; however it may also occur outside of the work setting. Violence may be perpetrated by a colleague or supervisor, a client or customer. When gender is incorporated in analyses of workplace violence, important issues emerge.

These include:

• Women have difficulty in labeling their experiences as violence and harassment;

• Women are over-represented in low paid, low status and precarious jobs;

• Occupational health and safety research has often viewed women's work as safe work;

• Men are more likely to be the perpetrators of violence against women in the workplace

The impacts and costs of workplace violence The negative consequences of workplace violence and harassment for women include leaving their jobs, developing psychological disorders, experiencing relationship breakdowns and developing substance abuse problems. Additional costs to industry include costs associated with staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced efficiency, decline in work quality, early retirement costs, counseling program costs, mediation or grievance proceedings, and anti-discrimination action.

Why violence against women at workplace violence is so prevalent? Despite such widespread occurrence of workplace harassment and violence, women do not report the matter. As a result the perpetrators do not face any credible deterrence. There have been allegations of sexual assault even against the members of higher judiciary in India.

Several reasons for why women do not report workplace violence were identified including: • Women see violence as a 'normal' part of the workplace, it is unavoidable and there is nothing that can be done about it;

• They don't know what to do about it;

• They can be silenced by the experience of workplace violence as it is seen as integrally connected with the shame associated with other types of men's violence against women;

• Some women fear they will lose their jobs if they report violence;

• Some women lack faith in the system, often believing the violence is already known to and condoned by managers;

• Some fear that the process of reporting is likely to be traumatic.

• Many a times, workplaces simply do not have effective mechanisms for addressing violence.

Providing safe environment and preventing violence against women in the workplace. Apart from the harassment and violence faced by women, there are other dimensions of safety at the workplace.

In this context, the guidelines for the safety for women at the workplace can be broadly categorized under four heads:

(a) Physical: This focuses on the physical security of women employees in an organization. It ascertains the safety of female employees, whilst they are on the job/ inside office premises – the workplace needs to be secured and women assured of basic safety on the job and in office.

(b) Environmental: The environmental aspect complements the physical aspect of security and helps maintain a safe and secure standard in any premises. This plays a vital role in ensuring the basic yet critical aspects of safety of employees.

(**c) Organizational:** It is for the employer to create a positive atmosphere at the workplace where a woman is encouraged to come to work, secure in the knowledge that she will be treated with dignity, respect and will be protected from harassment.

(d) Educational: The awareness of women employees of their company policies on sexual harassment and gender discrimination and the more they are encouraged to report all instances of discrimination without fear, the greater would be their feeling of security and empowerment.

13.5 LET US SUM UP

At present, rapid urbanization is challenging both national and local governments in their role to develop compact, inclusive, connected and integrated cities able to achieve spatial equality, job creation, human and community development, strategic infrastructure and environmental sustainability. In this process of fast urbanization, the failure to fully mainstream gender equality into urban planning, legislation and economic development is hindering the inclusiveness of cities and preventing the full integration of women and girls in the economic, social, political and cultural life of cities and therefore the realization of the just city. Compared to rural areas, cities offer more diverse employment opportunities to increase financial independence; greater ease in accessing education at different levels, better access to healthcare; more opportunities to socialize outside the home; more prospects to take up community or political leadership roles and, most notably, more possibilities to redefine the traditional roles of men and women.

Nevertheless, gender inequalities persist, therefore, women and girls benefit less from urbanization and the urban space than men and boys. In fact, women and girls in cities face a range of specific barriers and vulnerabilities: gender inequality, violence against women, poverty, unpaid care-work, limited control over assets, unequal participation in public and private decision-making, and barriers to education, employment, housing and basic services.

With limited options in our hands, and with time fast flying us by, the onus is on us to wake up and do whatever it takes. About 50% of India's registered voters are women, the power of whom together needs to demand a tougher India, yet an India that is sensitive to women. Women's issues need to be pushed in every lobby until the leaders have no choice but to yield and take a hold on the crisis that looms across every street and every corner of India today. This is the time we own up to ourselves. We stand by each other, tall and proud, brave and unfazed. This is the time we own up to India. No more Harassment. We want what we deserve - for us and for our daughters – a safer India for women.

13.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1.What are the ways in which women are discriminated in today's society?

2.Write about the position of a working women and the remedies followed.

13.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

From web to death females are facing lots of discrimination against them.
Some of them are: Abortion of female gravida with the help of scanning.Feticide (By giving liquid extract from cactus / opuntia, giving raw paddy to new born female baby, by pressing the face by pillow or by breaking the female baby's neck), Not giving enough and nutritious foo Not allowing to go to school (Denial of education)Not giving needy health care while in ill health Early marriage Eve teasing, Rape and Sexual harassment Dowry, Divorce, Destitution even for silly or without any reason.

When gender is incorporated in analyses of workplace violence, important issues emerge.

These include:

• Women have difficulty in labeling their experiences as violence and harassment;

• Women are over-represented in low paid, low status and precarious jobs;

• Occupational health and safety research has often viewed women's work as safe work;

• Men are more likely to be the perpetrators of violence against women in the workplace

The impacts and costs of workplace violence the negative consequences of workplace violence and harassment for women include leaving their jobs, developing psychological disorders, experiencing relationship breakdowns and developing substance abuse problems.Providing safe environment and preventing violence against women in the workplace could be done. Apart from the harassment and violence faced by women, there are other dimensions of safety at the workplace.

13.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1.Desai, Sonalde, 1994, "Gender Inequalities and DemographicBehaviours : India",   York, The Population Council, Inc.

2. Julie Mullin, 2008, "Gender Discrimination – Why is it still so bad andwhat can you do about it?", Accessed from www.childerninneed.orgon 15.08.2008.
3. Berta – Esteve – Volast, 2004, "Gender discrimination and Growth:Theory and Evidence from India," London, London School ofEconomics and Political Sciences.
4. Anna – Maria Lind, 2006, "Struggle and Development: Approachingbias in PracticalInternational Development Work", Orebro,Orebro University.
5. Kalyani Menon Sen and A.K.Shiva Kumar, 2001, "Women in India,How Free? How Equal?", New Delhi, UNDAF.
6. Government of India, 2008, "Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012),Vol. II, New Delhi, Planning Commission.

UNIT XIV –CRIMES AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Structure

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Crime against women has been a bane of India's development efforts. With arcane customs like sex being a taboo in India, Sati, and Dowry, and the overall lower status of women further exacerbates these crimes.

From the last decade's crime statistics, we see sharp number of crimes registered under ‘Cruelty by Husband and his Relatives’. It also appears that the same category has had the most dramatic rise over the years.

This is a surprising insight since the popular media is rife with news of rapes, which appear to be the most rampant and high profile of all the crimes. No other crime has been given as much attention in the media than Rape, with a significant increase in the last few years owing to cases like the Delhi Gang Rape, Scarlett Keeling Case in Goa, etc. which made international headlines.

The hype in the media compels us to believe that rapes are on a dramatic rise. However, the data reveals that rapes have more or less followed a flat trend.This raises a lot of questions - if the number of rapes was always the same (or this high), why all the sudden media attention? Where was the media in earlier years? Could the data hiding the truth for the last few years? There could be any one or more of multiple possible explanations.

14.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the societal violence that women undergo in India
- Analyze the major setbacks in the women protection and safety

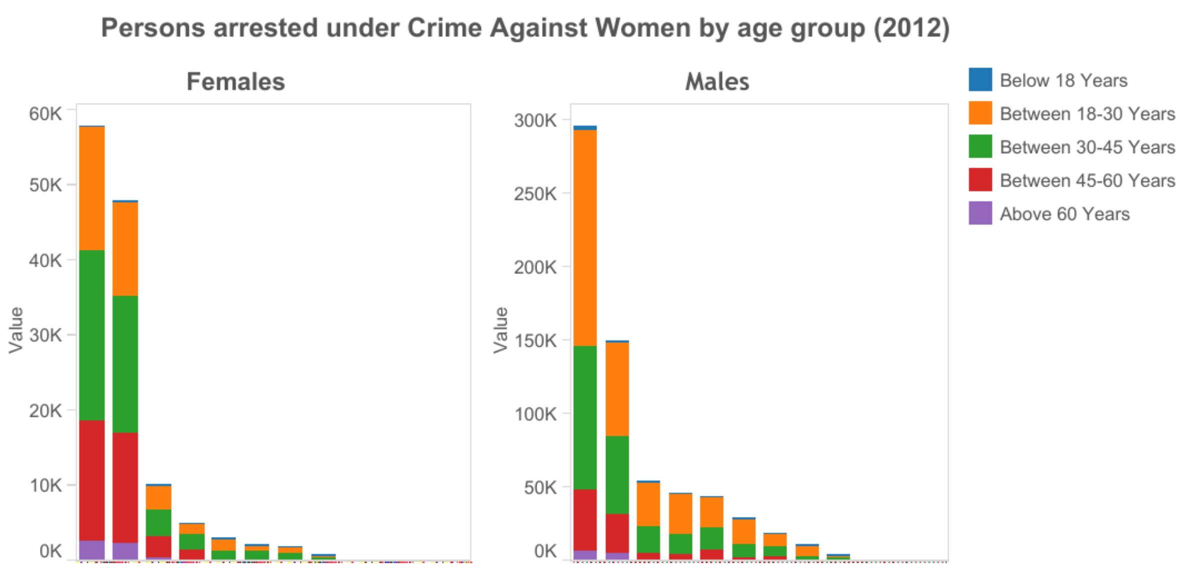
14.3 CRIMES AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The term violence against women has been used to describe a wide range of acts, including murder, rape and sexual assault, physical assault, emotional abuse, battering, stalking, prostitution, genital mutilation, sexual harassment, and pornography. There is little consensus in the still evolving field on exactly how to define violence against women. The major contention concerns whether to strictly define the word "violence" or to think of the phrase "violence against women" more broadly as aggressive behaviors that adversely and disproportionately affect women.

Women are more likely to be victimized by male offenders than by female offenders; about three-quarters of violent crimes against women are committed by males (Bachman, 1994). In one urban emergency room, violence was the most common cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 and the second most common cause of injury for all women (Grisso et al., 1991). Finally, women are far more likely than men to be sexually assaulted. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) found women were 10 times more likely to be raped or sexually assaulted than were men (Bastian, 1995). The annual rate of rape is estimated to be 7.1 per 1,000 adult women, and 13 percent of all women will experience forcible rape sometime during their lives (Kilpatrick et al., 1994).

The exact dimensions of violence against women are frequently disputed, yet even conservative estimates indicate that millions of American women experience violent victimization. The fear of violence, in particular the fear of rape, affects many more, if not most, women (Gordon and Riger, 1989). A few researchers have even suggested that learning to cope with the threat of violent victimization is a normative developmental task for females in the United States (Gilfus, 1995).

In spite of the attention that has been paid to violence against women in recent years, the research endeavor is relatively young, and much remains unknown. There really is no one field focused on violence against women per se. For example, studies on rape and sexual assault are distinct from those on intimate partner violence, which is distinct from the nascent study of stalking. And all this research is separate from that on violence in general. Many of the studies in this newly emerging field of research on violence against women are at an early stage of scientific rigor. The methodological weaknesses in the research on battering and rape have been discussed at length in other documents (Rosenbaum, 1988; Gelles, 1990; Koss, 1992, 1993; Rosenfeld, 1992; Smith, 1994). Definitions differ from study to study, making comparisons



14.3.1 Female infanticide

India has globally become a force to reckon with and this makes each one of us very proud. But there still are some ugly truths that need our attention and it's high time that we stop turning a deaf year towards them. Female infanticide is one such social issue.

Female infanticide is a heinous crime. In simple terms, it is a deliberate attempt to kill newborn female children within one year of their birth. It is a century old phenomena caused by social evils likes poverty, illiteracy, child marriage, dowry system, births to unmarried women, female genital mutilation, famine, maternal illness, sex-selective abortion, etc. These barbaric practices are still rampant in India, forcing people to commit social evils like female infanticide, female feticide, and sex-selective abortion.

In spite of being criminalized, it is one of the most under-reported crimes. Girl children in India often face various challenges from their childhood to their adulthood. On every step, girls face more rejection, discrimination, and fear than boys. This might not be evidently visible, but it is true. Sex ratio in India is rapidly decreasing. This is mostly to do with what is the 'value' of a girl child in India. There is a strong preference for male children than female children.

India as a society is insecure. Girls are not safe and girls from poverty-stricken families are even more vulnerable. They are often subjected to different kinds of harm, neglect, and violence in the form of abuse, harassment, domestic violence, rape, etc. Most Indians have stereotyped opinions about girls. They are socialized to believe that girls will eventually get married and go to another household and serve them. Therefore, girls are often considered a financial burden. Educating them is not deemed necessary and their opinions don't matter. This is one of the major reasons for preferring a son over a daughter.

The need of the hour is to change such narrow mindsets of people. This will help in empowering females. The government of India is trying to come up with various schemes to reduce discrimination against females and to change the preconceived notions people have about them. 'BetiBachao, BetiPadhao' is one such initiative that aims at providing survival, safety, and education to girl children.

Save the Children is a leading child rights non-government organisation (NGO). We work hand-in-hand with the government and the communities to ensure that every girl child gets a happy, protected, and safe childhood and a bright future.

Government alone cannot bring about the change we seek in our society. We all have to join hands in doing so. By supporting us you can not only avail tax benefits but also be heartened to know that you are one of the reasons that the girls in India are getting empowered. Educated and empowered girls will eventually grow up to be confident and independent women who will contribute towards our society and will be in a capacity to add millions to the Indian economy.

14.3.2 Eve teasing:

Eve teasing and molestation are problems that women all over the world, especially in India, grapple with everyday. Often, many women are unaware of the laws and regulations that give them protection against such acts. Here are some of the key legal sections dealing with sexual offences against women that all women must know about.

Under Section 298 A and Section 298 B of the Indian Penal Code, a man who is found guilty of making a female the target of obscene gestures, remarks, songs or recitation, can be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Under Section 292, if a man shows pornographic or obscene pictures, books or slips to a female, he will be fined a sum of Rs.2000 with two years of rigorous imprisonment, if the offence has been committed for the first time. In the event of a repeated offence, the guilty will be fined with Rs.5000 and spend five years in prison.

Section 354 imposes a two-year imprisonment with a fine when a person is found guilty of assault or using criminal force on a woman with intent to outrage her modesty.

Section 509 punishes the "intent to insult the modesty of any woman by use of words, sounds, gestures, or the exhibition of any object in such a way as to intrude upon the privacy of a woman" with a fine and one year in prison

There are various myths related to eve teasing. One of the biggest points is that eve teasing is propagated by wicked group of people. Absolutely not! He can be any normal looking guy. Next is, if this is ignored, it will go away or solve itself. No! Doing that would in fact encourage the culprit to get even stronger. Another belief, that eve teasers are macho men who accost anyone, is wrong. Eve teasers are cowards by nature and are experts in selecting the right time to target defenseless and meek woman who will not react in an assertive manner against their misdeeds.

14.4 WOMEN IN MASS MEDIA

The mass media function in the larger system of patriarchy and capitalism thatcontrols media structures and organisations and represents women assubordinates. The recent debate of mass media vis-a-vis gender produces muchmore complex understandings of the cultural dimensions of power and equality,and more specifically feminist analyses of the media, culture and society(Gallagher 1992). With the proliferation of 'women's genres' -- soap operas,melodramas, women's magazines and so on -- women have emerged as importantconsumers of mass entertainment. The mass media also set the agenda for publicopinion by selecting themes, items and points of views that tend to reinforcethe patriarchal culture. But, the media simply does not reflect the social realityand conditions our values, attitudes and behaviours.

They constitute only oneside of the construction of women's marginality in culture.

Although feminist activists and academicians concerned with the women's question have critically analyzed negative portrayal of women in media, research literature related to developing countries is uneven across regions. Indian scholarship has been given far more attention than any other country. Some research is reported from Asian countries, but scholarship from Latin America and Africa is hardly represented. This is partly due to unavailability of international research literature on women and mass media in India and partly due to my familiarity with Indian scholarship and strategies for change. It is assumed that despite apparent differences in societal context within which mass media function, there are striking similarities in the portrayal of women in mass media across divergent media systems in developing countries.

14.4.1 Films

It is a fact that the Indian society generally considers women as weak and inferior. As a result, a woman undergoes tremendous traumas from birth to death. Many girl children are annihilated even before they see the light of the day, many girls are raped on roads or at homes, many wives are beaten by their husbands and in-laws, many girls have to give up their education to help their parents to earn money. But media are not focussing those problems. They are only busy with to publish the gossips of the actors and actresses, the love stories between them. This negative attitude towards women in real life is very much reflected in the way media represents them as well. Media representations of Indian women reveal that they are less accepted and respected as persons and more looked upon as objects. She has three projected roles--- biological, domestic and decorative. Media are hardly challenging the gender attitudes promoted and perpetuated by the society. Watching a BBC documentary on Indian cinema a British youngster commented, “Indians must be very poor, and they seem to have very little respect for women”. He had after all seen a few clippings of films inserted in the documentary. What if he were to watch at length, more of our kitsch movies and worse still sexually suggestive, dehumanizing song sequences.

Cinema is also one of the most important and cheapest visual medium of entertainment in contemporary India. Unfortunately, the commercial film industry, which is a purely profit based industry, cares little about the image of women they portray to the public. Commercial films have followed a set pattern of female image portrayals wherein women are projected as sacrificing themselves for the family and reaffirming values of self-effacement and devotion to the male head of the family. Women who opt for a less traditional life are portrayed in a negative light. Furthermore, these films vividly portray physical violence against women and hardly ever show women as being capable of thinking for them in a logical and rational manner.

TV serials are depicting women and young females as involved in conspiracy, pre-marital, extra-marital, post illicit affairs, wearing costly, heavy golden, and diamond jewellery, perpetuating their religious fundamentalism, spending time in family feuds, suicidal love affairs, mega parties, palatial houses, luxury cars, sleek mobiles, elegant make-ups, little care about anything

else than the individual matters, and at all mob even a word about the outside world.

14.4.2 Advertisements

Now a day, as a visual media, advertisements play important role in promoting different products. Everyday we are exposed to a number of advertisements through various media vehicles like newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet and various outdoor media. But there has been much criticisms against advertisements as these are portraying women as sex objects.

Women's physical attraction has been used as a whole, or in parts, to market everything from brassiers, male under garments to automobiles. These ubiquitous images encourage people to think of sex and women as commodity, and these may contribute to violence against women. For example, there is an advertisement of a premium whisky that shows one man is taking first sip of that particular whisky and the lady sitting in front of him appears to be loosing some inches of her dress, after every drink the process is going on up three drinks. After three sips of the drink he finds that the breasts of the previously over clad lady have become quick visible and half clad and his own shirt has slipped from his shoulders.

The depiction of women in this and other advertisements is actually insult to the women in general which are destroying the real status and dignity of women. According to a United Nations Research Report (1975) on Advertising and the Portrayal of Women, advertisements have been held responsible for projecting women in a derogatory light, and as inferior class of beings (National Advertising Review Board, 1975).

Shrivastava's research on the Indian media has shown that the dominant negative stereotypes in connection to the portrayal of women are:

1. A woman's place is in the home.
2. The most important and valuable asset of a women is physical beauty.
3. A woman's energies and intellect must be directed toward finding the right man.
4. Women are dependent coy and submissive; they are masochistic in their response to indignities humiliations, and even to physical violence inflicted upon them
5. The good woman is the traditional house wife long suffering, pious and submissive; the modern woman who asserts herself and her independence is undesirable and can never bring happiness to anybody nor find happiness for herself.
6. Women are women's worst enemies.
7. The working woman is the undesirable exception who must be brought in to the marriage fold and made to conform to traditional social norms.

The print media in India (when compared to electronic media) have limited impact on the vast and mainly illiterate population of the country. The majority of the population has depended on the oral tradition of cultural transmission for over two hundred years. It has been seen in the newspapers

that these give place to the news related to rape, crime, politics, scandals, sports and economics; serious debates and discussions on issues related to women are completely missing.

In vernacular press the depiction of women gets a share only in coloured pages where there is a lot of gossip about actress of TV serials and film stars along with some hot pick-ups.The English press also dwells upon providing snaps of the hot babes and erotic photo gallery of party mania in multistar hotels. Magazines as well as newspapers have sections for females where the readers are left only with the option of reading some personal gynaecologicalproblems of married women or personal love hick-ups of young girls, otherwise special features on knitting, fashion, sales etc.are the routine one. As a result, most of the feminist writers have come forward to study about the present status of women in media.

And the necessity of feminist approach to the media is being acknowledged everywhere today. The world wide feminist movement has pointed out that the portrayal and employment of women in media are in a most derogatory position.

Thus, it can be said that there is an on-going trend in Indian Media to portray women as busy and concerned with beautifying herself, choosing make-up, new fashions, jewellery, cosmatics, constantly watching her weight, worried about good figure and skin colour, proud of advertising and selling latest products. She is hardly portrayed as having social commitments, capable of intelligent decision making, or as capable leaders and policy makers. Usually she is shown to accompany her husband like a shadow or as a decorative piece. Manu’s dictum that ‘a woman is protected by her father in childhood, husband in adulthood and son in old age’ is perpetuated in all media representation. In most representations she is tactfully domesticated, and her place is ‘home and hearth’ by unwritten codes of society. Every thing around her is arranged in such a way that she can’t let herself loose. Women who break this unwritten code and re-arrange their day are considered feminists or rebels. And media is playing their role perfectly to preserve the societal concepts. As a result, most of the mediated women are “weak, passive, needy and subservient, or vain, irrational and hot-headed. But the question is how to turn the media into an effective tool for promoting constructive change and faithfully representing the multiple roles of the women today---as achiever both at home and in the labour force.

14.5 LET US SUM UP

Educating women and empowering them will be essential, but it won't be enough. We need to provide all children from different backgrounds in schools scope to grow in a way that respects every one from every gender in order to ensure that the next generation turns out more respectful of one another (and of how women are treated).

It has been observed that children coming from homes where the father beats up the mother or abuses her, grow up with violence being registered subconsciously as a normal part of their lives.

It affects their behaviour and attitude towards their counterparts in society. It is necessary to have counselors in schools to guide children like

these affected ones at influential stages of their lives so that they can grow independently of such home grown gender biased influences.

Law enforcement officials, people engaged in public transportation services and other services in the public spaces should be sensitized adequately in order to make sure women in public spaces feel more secure.

Most importantly, to conclude, women in India should be taught and encouraged to raise their voices against any form of discrimination that they may face, however small due to gendered stereotypes operating in society. Assistance should be made available to those who raise their voices so that more women come out into the open to claim their deserved spaces in the development agenda of the state.

14.6 UNIT – END EXERCISES

1. How does media project women?

2. What are ways we can help women to lead a safe and a respectful life?

14.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Shrivastava's research on the Indian media has shown that the dominant negative stereotypes in connection to the portrayal of women are:

1. A woman's place is in the home.
2. The most important and valuable asset of a women is physical beauty.
3. A woman's energies and intellect must be directed toward finding the right man.
4. Women are dependent coy and submissive; they are masochistic in their response to indignities humiliations, and even to physical violence inflicted upon them
5. The good woman is the traditional house wife long suffering, pious and submissive; the modern woman who asserts herself and her independence is undesirable and can never bring happiness to anybody nor find happiness for herself.
6. Women are women's worst enemies.
7. The working woman is the undesirable exception who must be brought in to the marriage fold and made to conform to traditional social norms.

Educating women and empowering them will be essential, but it won't be enough. We need to provide all children from different backgrounds in schools scope to grow in a way that respects every one from every gender in order to ensure that the next generation turns out more respectful of one another (and of how women are treated).

It has been observed that children coming from homes where the father beats up the mother or abuses her, grow up with violence being registered subconsciously as a normal part of their lives.

It affects their behaviour and attitude towards their counterparts in society. It is necessary to have counsellors in schools to guide children like these affected ones at influential stages of their lives so that they can grow independently of such home grown gender biased influences.

Law enforcement officials, people engaged in public transportation services and other services in the public spaces should be sensitized adequately in order to make sure women in public spaces feel more secure

14.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. B. Axford&R.Huggins, (2001).New Media and Politics, sage publication, London.
2. Ball, M, (1985).January 28, India:A sleeping giant finally opens doors to the west. Advertising Age, 56-62.
3. Choudhury, M, (2000), Feminism in print media, Indian journal of gender studies, 2007; 7:263.
4. Desai, N, &Krishnaraj, M, (1990), Women and society in India, New Delhi, Ajanta Prakashan.
5. Desai and Patel (1990), Indian women: change and challenge in the International decade, 1975-1985, Bombay, Popular prakashan.
6. Jha, R. (1992), Women in Print media: Initiating new perspectives, New Delhi, Northern book center. KevalJ.kumar, (1998), Mass Communication in media, Jaico, Bombay, pp.140-143.
7. Pandey,M.(1991) The subject is women, New Delhi,Sanchar Publishing House.